DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 321 234 CS 010 150

AUTHOR	Headlam, Alis L.
TITLE	Examining Cultural Relevancy in the "Doctor Bird Readers."
PUB DATE	Sep 89
NOTE	393p.; Ed.D. Dissertation, University of Massachusetts. For a paper on this subject, see CS 010 149.
PUB TYPE	Dissertations/Theses - Doctoral Dissertations (041) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC16 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Childrens Literature; *Cultural Awareness; Cultural Background; *Cultural Context; Cultural Influences; Foreign Countries; Instructional Effectiveness; Intermediate Grades; Interviews; Questionnaires; Reading Habits; Reading Instruction; *Reading Materials; Reading Research
IDENTIFIERS	*Cultural Relevance; *Jamaica; Text Factors

ABSTRACT

The "Doctor Bird Readers" represent a first attempt by the Jamaican government to produce readers for children in grades four-six by using Jamaican authors and artists. This study examined whether cultural relevancy was achieved in the development of stories for the "Doctor Bird Readers." A quantitative questionnaire combined with interview data collected during a pilot study shows that the books were regarded as culturally relevant by both students and teachers. In the study, information gathered during interviews with authors and artists examines why they chose certain stories or illustrations. Interviews with children and teachers indicated elements of the stories, illustrations, and language that they considered relevant. The study concluded that the books achieved a high degree of relevancy. Children are able to find themselves and other familiar persons, events, and settings in the stories, the illustrations, and the language. Results indicated that the books have had a significant impact on reading education in Jamaica. For the first time, all children in grades four-six have their own books which, are given free of charge. Children read not only in their classrooms but also at home. Results indicated that low and middle reading groups are having greater success with reading than they have had with previous books. (Appendixes include book lists by grade level, authors and artists, evaluation of readers, questionnaires, pilot study information, letters and agreement contracts, factors affecting the study, and story analysis for grades four, five, and six. Eighty references are attached.) (MG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED321234

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

ALIS HEADLAM

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

EXAMINING CULTURAL RELEVANCY IN THE DOCTOR BIRD READERS

A Dissertation Presented

by

ALIS L. HEADLAM

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September 1989

School of Education

CS010150

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

c Copyright by Alis Headlam 1989

All Rights Reserved

EXAMINING CULTURAL RELEVANCY IN THE DOCTOR BIRD READERS

A Dissertation Presented

by

ALIS L. HEADLAM

Approved as to style and content by:

Sonia Nieto

Sonia Nieto, Chairperson of Committee

Judy Solsken

Judy Solsken, Member

Jan Dizard

Jan Dizard, Member

Marilyn Haring-Hidore, Dean
School of Education

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to Grace Eweka, one of the creators of the book project, who died in Africa shortly after the project began and to Hyacinth (Peggy) Campbell who died after the books had been distributed to the schools. If it had not been for their efforts this project would not have come about.

I would further like to dedicate my efforts to my mother, Amy Glazier, who passed away before I was able to complete the writing. Without her encouragement and support the writing would not have been completed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Olive Forrester for her support and assistance in arranging the introductions to authors, artists and the schools. I would also like to thank the authors and artists who so patiently participated in my lengthy interview sessions. I am especially grateful to the children in the four schools who cooperated with me.

I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Sonia Nieto, Dr. Judy Solskein and Dr. Jan Dizard for helping me through a very difficult writing process by encouraging and supporting me at every step.

I would like also to thank my husband, Ronald Headlam, my father, Lyle Glazier and my aunt, Olive Niles for their continued support and interest in my work.

ABSTRACT

EXAMINING CULTURAL RELEVANCY IN THE DOCTOR BIRD READERS

SEPTEMBER 1989

ALIS HEADLAM, B.A. UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

M.A. LESLEY COLLEGE

Ed.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

Directed by: Dr. Sonia Nieto

The Doctor Bird Readers represents a first attempt by the Jamaican government to produce reading books for children in grades 4 - 6. The Ministry of Education sought to develop stories which were relevant to the lives of the readers by using Jamaican authors and artists.

This dissertation uses primarily a qualitative methodology to examine whether cultural relevancy was achieved. An important element of the research describes the researcher's immersion in the Jamaican culture before beginning interviews with authors, artists, students, and teachers.

A quantitative questionnaire combined with interview data collected during a pilot study shows that the books were regarded as culturally relevant by both students and teachers. This data confirms a study conducted by the Ministry of Education prior to island-wide distribution of the books.

In the study information gathered during interviews with authors and artists examines why they chose certain stories or illustrations. Interviews with children and teachers indicate elements of the stories, illustrations and language that they considered relevant.

The study concludes that the books achieved a high degree of relevancy. Children are able to find themselves, and other familiar persons, events and settings in the stories, the illustrations and the language. This research supports the notion that the content of the text, not the words themselves, is what makes the text relevant to children.

The books have had a significant impact on reading education in Jamaica. For the first time all children in grades 4 - 6 have their own books which are given free of charge. Children read not only in their classrooms but also at home. Low and middle reading groups are having greater success with reading than with previous books. The project is considered a success by the Ministry of Education and continues to be funded today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS....................................v

ABSTRACT..vi

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION....................................1

Background of the Problem..........................1
Nature of the Problem..............................7
Definition of Terms................................9
Theoretical Framework..............................10
Approach to This Study.............................25
Scope and Limitations..............................28
Significance.......................................29
Summary..30

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE....................32

Text Analysis Research.............................32
Checklists Reviewed................................39
Ethnographies in Reading Research..................43
Conclusions..48

3. METHODOLOGY.....................................49

Definitions..49
Development of a Methodology.......................52
Procedures...54
Summary..64

4. PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES..........................66

Preparation for This Research Project..............66
Questionnaire......................................72
Selection of Schools...............................79
Ethnographic Records...............................83
Conclusions..121

5. PILOT STUDY.....................................125

Methodology..125
Purpose of This Study..............................125
Introduction to Patience School....................126
Selection of Students for Interviews...............139
Analysis of Student Interviews.....................141
Analysis of Teacher Interviews.....................149
Findings...152
Comparison to Ministry Study.......................162

Conclusions and Research Recommendations..........166
Summary..170

6. AUTHORS AND ARTISTS INTERVIEWS....................173
Profiles of the Authors and Artists..............174
Writing and Production Process...................183
Discussion of Stories............................194
Reflective Process...............................206
Findings...212
Summary..214

7. ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL INTERVIEWS.....................216

Introduction to Schools and Students.............217
Student Interviews...............................241
Conclusions......................................268
Teacher Interviews...............................275
Conclusions......................................282
Summary..283

8. FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS........286

Restatement of the Problem.......................287
Findings...288
Issues and Problems in Conducting This Study......301
Implications of This Study.......................307
Recommendations for Future Research..............311
Summary..312

APPENDICES

A. DR. BIRD READERS LISTED BY GRADE LEVEL.........316
B. LIST OF AUTHORS AND ARTISTS....................319
C. EVALUATION OF READERS: PRIMARY READING PROJECT.321
D. PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOLS..........332
E. QUESTIONNAIRE: RECORD OF RETURNS...............335
F. QUESTIONNAIRE: CREDITS/CONCERNS................337
G. RECORD OF SCHOOL VISITS........................342
H. MAP OF JAMAICA.................................345
I. LETTER FROM MR. DAVIS..........................347
J. PILOT STUDY: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE.............349
K. Pilot Study: Teacher Questionnaire.............353
L. PARTICIPANT/RESEARCHER AGREEMENT FOR TEACHERS..355
L. STUDENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE..................358
M. STUDENT PROFILES BY SCHOOL.....................360
N. FACTORS USED TO DETERMINE SOCIO-ECONOMIC
SITUATIONS OF STUDENTS........................364
O. PARTICIPANT/RESEARCHER AGREEMENT FOR PARENTS...366

R. STORY ANALYSIS FOR GRADES 4, 5, AND 6..........368
Q. PARTICIPANT/RESEARCHER AGREEMENT FOR AUTHORS AND ARTISTS...................................372

BIBLIOGRAPHY..375

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

In the summer of 1979 I was on holiday in Negril, Jamaica. While I was there for the month I initiated tutoring with a ten year old boy, Johnny.[1] He brought me his reading book, a reader from England. While we were reading one particular passage we came across a sentence with the word, `carpet'. I had been assisting Johnny to use phonetic analysis of words so I encouraged him to `sound out' the first syllable and then the second. The result was that `car'- `pet' did not make any sense to him. As I examined the situation in my mind I realized that the problem was not with sounding out the word, but rather one of cultural unfamiliarity. In the rural community where Johnny lived houses did not have carpets. While the big hotels might have carpeting in their rooms, to Johnny the floor covering that was familiar was called a `mat'. This experience with Johnny was the beginning of my interest in text analysis of the relevancy of books to the reader.

In April of 1981 I attended the International Reading Conference in New Orleans. One of the presentations was done by a group from the Ministry of Education of Jamaica. They were in the process of completing a reading series for use in the Jamaican public schools. The series was named after the national bird of Jamaica, the Doctor Bird Readers. The title seemed appropriate because it represented the first attempt by the Jamaican government to produce a culturally relevant reading series for grades 4-6. They did this by using local authors who wrote stories mostly focusing on local settings, people and events. In addition, the illustrations were commissioned to a large extent from local artists. The end result was a very exciting series of books that told children about growing up in Jamaica and other parts of the world, from a Jamaican perspective. I decided that I would use this reading series as the basis for my study.

The following chapter provides a description of the Dr. Bird Readers including an introduction to the authors and artists, and a discussion of the sequence of the book production that led up to the current series. In addition, the chapter looks at the nature of the problem posed for this research and the theoretical framework that supports it. The final three sections of the chapter examine the approach taken to the research, its scope and limitations, and its significance in both a local and global perspective.

Description of the Dr. Bird Readers

The project originally called the Primary Reading Project was funded jointly by the Ministry of Education in Jamaica and the Organization of American States. Using the

Language Materials Workshop (LMW)[2] series for grade 1-3 as a base, the Primary Reading Project continued the effort to provide relevant and suitable instructional materials. The Ministry was concerned with developing materials that were of high interest and that would increase motivation of non-proficient readers. The vocabulary that was used in grade 1-3 was incorporated into the new series. A series of reading books for grade 4-6 were produced between 1978 and 1980 (Eweka, undated; Forrester, undated; Forrester, 1983).

The reading books were called the Dr. Bird Readers after the Jamaican hummingbird known for its

> speed, ease, grace, accuracy, fluency of movement, and muscular coordination of a very high standard. This is a tiny bird, rather beautiful to look at with its iridescent colours, and forked tail trailing feathers. All these qualities of the Doctor Bird which if examined carefully reflect some of the qualities and skills of an efficient reader, may or may not have been thought of when the name was selected for the reading series...(Forrester, undated report, pg. 2).

The readers are designed for ease, speed, accuracy and fluency. They were written for students from all socio-economic classes and are non-discriminatory like the Doctor Bird who finds all flowers inviting (Forrester, undated).

The original set of books produced contained 79 stories and selections in 34 books. There were eleven books each for fourth and sixth grade classes and twelve for fifth grade classes. (See Appendix A)

The following variables were influential in preparing the series:

1. The wide range of reading levels at grade 4 - 5.
2. The differences in motivation of the children.
3. The differences in learning rates of the children.
4. Native language differences ranging from children who speak a basilect or mesolect, or acrolect form of the dialect.[3]

The stories are presented developmentally so that vocabulary and prose presentation gets more difficult throughout each grade level and across grade levels. The vocabulary used in the stories was carefully controlled. (See Chapter 6 for a discussion of the controlled vocabulary.) The stories themselves are designed to satisfy Ministry concerns over subject matter and especially to satisfy the interests of the children readers. Both fiction and non-fiction stories are presented. Three teacher manuals, one for each grade, accompany the series (Forrester 1983).

The project was directed by Jeff Schatzman, Reading officer, under the direction of Grace Eweka, Acting Chief Education officer, at the Ministry of Education. Authors included Peggy Campbell, a teacher trainer and writer with the LMW series; Diane Browne, a former teacher and writer; and Karl Philpotts, a writer who had worked on the JAMAL (Jamaica Movement Advancement of Literacy) adult literacy books. (See Appendix B) Consultants from the United States on the project were Lawrence Carillo who worked on the planning and writing of the readers, and Henry Bamman who assisted in production of the teacher guides. (See Chapter 6 for interviews.) Olive Forrester, an officer in Language and later Head of the Core Curriculum Unit also consulted with the project team (Forrester, undated).

Illustrations were done by thirteen artists. (See Appendix B) A wide selection of artists was used in an effort to share the bounty of the work. Their work was overseen by Marguerite Curtin, acting SEO publications. (More information about the artist selection is discussed in an interview with Marguerite Curtin in Chapter Six.)

The study was pilot tested by the Ministry of Education at six schools. One class in each school was selected for the study. Lawrence Carillo oversaw the evaluation of the books. Teachers and students were given questionnaires to fill out about the books. The teachers were asked to use a five point rating scale to measure story length, interest, difficulty, vocabulary, sentence structure, adequacy of illustration, and format. They were asked to compare the materials in these books to those they had used before.

One of the writers and the consultant interviewed four children in each class. Students were given questions and asked to evaluate the books in terms of what they liked about them. They were asked questions about which characters and stories they liked and why; about the quantity of information; about anything new they learned; about the difficulty of the books; about the realism of the characters; and the usefulness of the information in the books.

The findings of the study indicated that the books were favorably accepted by teachers and students. Problems had to do with difficulty of some of the material for lower level students, stories that were too lengthy, typographical errors, and the need for teacher guides. These issues were addressed in the teacher guides which were prepared and presented after the study (Forrester, undated).

Comments from students indicated that most of the books were easy to read but some non-fiction pieces contained difficult vocabulary. The stories that were liked were often favored because of the morals presented. Stories that were not liked were those that had unpleasant characters or morals. The children recognized characters that were like themselves or people they knew. Both the pictures and conversations seemed real (Forrester, 1983). This evaluation was confirmed by my own questionnaire (See Chapter 4) and my pilot study for this research (See Chapter 5).

Nature of the Problem

The books aroused my interest in text analysis for cultural relevancy. I began to develop the questions which would formulate the research. Just how relevant had the government been able to make these books? Would children like Johnny in the most rural areas of Jamaica find themselves in these stories? Was there a way to measure the relationship between their culture and text?

Several theories influenced my decision about how to proceed. Psycholinguistic research offered evidence from linguists and cognitive psychologists that indicated that a whole language process of reading rather than a combination of learned skills is involved in comprehending text. The research indicates that background knowledge (personal and cultural experiences) play a greater role in comprehension than individual words.

Schema theorists argue that reading involves integration of background knowledge and new information by means of placing the information into a conceptual system they describe as a knowledge structure. When one piece of knowledge is brought into view it connects to other pieces of related knowledge.

The language theorists relate language learning to culture. Language is also related to comprehension. Familiar language structures facilitate comprehension. However, comprehension occurs because of the comprehension of total language communication, not the words themselves. Dialect evidence in miscues is not an indication of failure to comprehend text. However, the structure and content of language does affect comprehension.

By examining the issues of multicultural education it is clear that ethnic studies need to involve students in the study of culture that is positive and informative. This study should involve all content areas of a child's education. Multicultural education also offers a perspective of the role that cultural and ethnic variables perform in texts. Children need to find themselves represented in their books. This must be done in a positive manner. The solution lies in a program that develops an understanding of positive ethnic identity.

Finally, the theoretical work done in ethnography provides a foundation from which qualitative research techniques can be developed to address questions about the Dr. Bird Readers from the perspective of the primary school age readers.

The research that follows adds to the evaluation conducted by the Ministry of Education (See Appendix C) which looked at the stories that the children liked or disliked. The conclusions reached included comments indicating an appropriateness of grade level and a successful arousal of student's interest in the stories. The research summarizes, "this is a Jamaican series of books, fitted to Jamaican children and teachers"(Carrillo, undated, p. 6). My research will attempt to confirm the findings of the Ministry study. In addition, my study will expand on the original study. It will examine the issue of language and importance of dialect. The research will examine the content of the stories, the content of the illustrations and the content of the language in the Doctor Bird Readers to discover what the author intended and what the reader perceived. This research will not only confirm the earlier study but will extend beyond it by examining aspects of culture that were transmitted in the books in order to make them relevant to the young readers. It looks at characterization, setting, dialogue, and story to determine those elements children find relevant to their lives.

Definition of Terms

Text Schema

Schema as defined here is used to describe a structure that contains the basic connections of linguistic, visual and conceptual processing systems by which we make sense of our world. A text schema is framework of meaning provided by the author that represents his/her world perspective.

Cultural Relevancy in Texts

Culturally relevant texts provide a schema which fits into the readers' already existing knowledge of themselves, their friends, their family, their environment and their experiences. The schema provided in the text by the authors must, therefore, be compatible with the existing schema held by the readers. While there may be differences in the details or schemata of the author and reader's schema, the basic linguistic, visual and conceptual connection is enough to transmit meaning.

Theoretical Framework

The following section describes psycholinguistic research. It specifically looks at the relationships of language, text, and reader comprehension. Multicultural education theorists provide a strong argument for relevant materials and that is described here as well. The last section examines ethnography as a methodology for pursuing the understanding of culture, evaluation of a book publishing project and reader's perceptions of those books. This theoretical framework provides the basis for the approach taken to this research.

Psycholinguistic Theory

Psycholinguistic research has shown that the reader's primary goal is to read to gain meaning from a text (Cooper & Petrosky, 1976; Reynolds, et al 1982; Goodman, 1986; Gilles, 1988). Studies have shown that the eyes focus on meaningful words rather than on every individual word or letter (Carpenter & Just 1980). In fact a study by Rayner and Bertera (1979) shows when a reader is forced to focus on every letter or every word the reading rate is slowed down considerably and comprehension is more difficult, if not impossible (Smith, 1973). Reader familiarity with the content, linguistic experience and personal experiences all contribute to increased comprehension of text (Goodman, 1968; Reynolds et al, 1982). What is perceived and how quickly it is perceived depends on how meaningful the text is in relation to the reader's experience. Smith (1985) says that the result of limited nonvisual (background knowledge) information is a kind of tunnel vision. The brain becomes overloaded with the details of the print. He further states that if the material being read is something that children would not understand orally there is no way they will understand it by reading it themselves. Thus, the nature of the content of a text and its relationship to the reader's background knowledge is more important than the individual words in print.

An examination of schema theory in reading looks at why this occurs. A schema is defined as "a conceptual system for understanding something" (Harris & Hodges, 1981, p. 286). It is an "abstract knowledge structure...(that is) structured in the sense that it represents the relationships among its component parts" (Anderson & Pearson, 1984, p. 9). It is this cognitive structure that the reader uses when trying to make sense out of the print. The cognitive structure contains elements of the reader's experience and background knowledge (Anderson, 1984; Singer

1989). "The total set of schemata (knowledge units) we have available for interpreting our world in a sense constitutes our private theory of the nature of reality" (Rumelhart, 1980, p. 37). The written words stimulate the reader's schema. When there is a match between the intended schema of the writer and the perceived schema by the reader, meaning has been exchanged and comprehension achieved.

One of the most basic reasons for a mismatch between the author's intended schema and the reader's perceived schema would be a cultural difference. Watson (1988) says that the `diversity of life experiences' are what constitute the cognitive structures through which we make sense of print. "...the new information generated there must in some way fit into an existing schema, if knowledge is to flourish and expand" (Watson, 1988, p. 4). Anderson and Pearson (1984) state that language is comprehended not just from abstract or generalized background information but also by knowledge of specifics. In addition, they point out that the reader recognizes word meanings in context and this understanding provides the reader with a means of connecting background information to the text. In a situation where the writer is from a different culture than the reader, there is a far greater chance that the context will not give the reader the intended clues or that the reader will not have appropriate background knowledge to interpret the clues. The result is a cultural mismatch of text and reader, followed by a lack of comprehension on the part of the reader.

For example: If I were to say: "De pickney lick mi plant." A reader unfamiliar with Jamaican dialect would have difficulty understanding that it says: The child hit my plant. Unfamiliar words or phrases will block the reader from uncovering the appropriate schema. Not only must the content of the text be familiar but the language must also be recognizable. Spiro (1980) says, "What language provides is a skeleton, a blueprint for the creation of meaning" (Spiro, 1980, p. 245).

Smoliez states that language is fundamental to culture. In fact, "because of its structure language determines the way we perceive and sense the world" (Smoliez, 1979, p. 11). Halliday (1976) relates this to reading. The language that the child learns in a cultural context is the language that he/she uses to predict the content of texts. Familiarity with grammatical structures would allow a reader to predict the next type of word based on the one previous (Chomsky, 1957). Ruddell(1965) concludes that comprehension of reading material is higher when the structures of oral language are used.

Several researchers have advocated, therefore, that learning to read in one's dialect would be easier than reading an unfamiliar dialect (Cramer, 1971; McDermott, 1977; Troike, 1977). A less radical view would be to accept the notion that for all children the language of the text is new. Clay (1972) says beginning readers must learn to "talk like a book." This is supported by the notion that children need training in Standard English before they should be asked to read it (Singer, 1989; Smith, N.B., 1975; Wanat, 1971).

Sims (1972) evaluated the miscues of 10 second graders in Detroit. The students read stories in Standard English and dialect. She concludes, "..even for the less proficient group, the dialect story was not easier as expected" (Sims, 1972, p. 145). Sims concludes with a recommendation that students be exposed to Standard English in text rather than trying to standardize dialect.

Goodman (1978) looked at linguistic minority children and concluded, "Teachers assume that what a child can say is an indication of what he/she can understand. What gets lost is that often children in linguistic minorities can understand dialects they can't produce..."(Goodman & Goodman, 1978, p. 8-1). Goodman concludes that the attitude towards language difference is critical and "...that special materials are not needed for any of our low-status dialect groups" (Goodman & Goodman, 1978, p. 8-5). He further adds that the results of his study show that any problem his readers had was connected to making sense of what they read. The ideal curriculum he suggests would expand on the reader's language, culture, interests and common experiences.

The psycholinguistic research supports a theory of comprehension based on the importance of a content that is highly relevant to the reader and one, therefore, that fits easily into the reader's already existing knowledge structure. The closer the content of the story, the content of the illustrations and the content of the language is to the reader's cultural and background experience, the easier it will be to understand.

Multicultural Education

Harste, Woodward and Burke (1984) found that indicators of potential literacy learning are not related to sex, race or socio-economic status. In their study of children's responses to environmental print they found that the responses of young children, ages 3 - 6, to environmental print showed no difference to indicate that Black children or inner-city children were less able to respond. They conclude that if the parental socioeconomic status is a factor in learning to read, this factor did not show up in these response patterns for children at these ages. The variables for determining readiness to read depend more on the availability of materials and encouragement to practice literacy. The problem with potential literacy is not within the children, but rather with the materials and instruction provided.

Multicultural education also argues that ethnically appropriate materials need to be prepared for every aspect of the child's education including reading. These materials need to address both cognitive and affective needs. They should encompass many different aspects of life in particular culture in a positive and meaningful manner. They must be authentic. They need to include both majority and minority groups in a particular culture (Gay, 1975). When this does not occur students have difficulty in school.

Multicultural educators have examined the effect of the content of texts on the reader. Not only must the content be relevant but it must be presented in a manner that is culturally consistent with the values and practices of the reader's culture to insure effective communication. Researchers specifically looked for the results of cultural and ethnic bias. Banks refers to studies that show students who do not have examples of people from the same ethnic and cultural background do not do as well in school as those children who are found to be represented in their textbooks (Banks, 1987). Coopersmith (1975) states that both self-concept and self-esteem are associated with academic performance, and this relates directly to a positive or negative nature of the information students have about themselves. In a study by Christopher Bagley and Bernard Coard (1975) West Indian children in three London schools were shown to have poor concepts of their cultural background. As a result they tended to reject their ethnic identity and favour European characteristics such as hair, skin and eye colour. Furthermore, it was found that these children tended to be seen as behavior problems. When examining the white children in the same classrooms self-rejection of ethnic identity was not found.

These studies demonstrate that having ethnic materials available to students encourages learning to take place and improves overall school performance. When these materials are not available achievement is less likely to occur.

Suzuki (1979) states that the solution to this problem is to begin education by helping students to know and understand their own ethnic identities. In this way, he continues, students will see the relationship between education and their own lives. Furthermore, this knowledge will serve as a foundation to help students develop an understanding of other cultures and ethnic groups. We can conclude from this that reading texts will better prepare students for success in school when they introduce culturally relevant materials before exposing children to unfamiliar cultures.

We have seen in the research of the psycholinguists that when the writer and the reader do not share the same interpretation of a text communication breaks down and the reader is unable to comprehend the message. James Banks, a multicultural theorist, also concluded that "The wider the differences in cultures or microcultures between individuals, the more ineffective communication is likely to be"(Banks, 1987, p.80). Banks (1987) says that a student's prior experience with concepts and content, particularly those that are related to race and ethnicity, needs to be considered when concepts are selected for study. A reader is most familiar with his/her own experience: cultural, linguistic and academic. It is this familiarity that allows him/her to determine the meaning of text. The closer a text is to the actual experience of the reader the greater the opportunity for comprehension of what the author intended. The evidence indicates that when the author and reader are from the same cultural background they will have a greater chance of successful communication.

Since the relationship between the author and the reader can be seen to be of primary importance, a text content analysis for cultural relevancy would need to include a means of evaluating how the content is portrayed by the author as well as how it is perceived by the reader. The evaluation needs to include an analysis of content, language and illustrations from the perspective of both the authors and readers.

Qualitative Research

Ethnographic research offers a means of examining questions qualitatively. Spradley (1980) states that "Rather than studying people, ethnography means learning from people" (Spradley, 1980, p.3). The objective is to understand the world through the participant's perspective. "The task of the qualitative methodologist is to capture what people say and do as a product of how they interpret the complexity of their world" (Sevigney, 1981, p. 68). Ethnographic research has been used specifically to describe cultures. Ethnographers examine information gathered directly from informants by observation and interview. Records are kept in field notes and on tape recordings. Many researchers keep lengthy journals with vivid descriptions of their experiences. Behavior can be recorded as the observer sees it and be verified in interviews. Information gathered in interviews can be quoted directly and can express accurate individual perceptions. However, no ethnography is held to using all, or limited by, the above mentioned techniques. Ethnography is a process rather than a set of methods or techniques (Guthrie, 1984).

Ethnographies have been done by anthropologists who live within the communities they are studying. Margaret Mead spent nine months studying adolescent girls in Samoa. In order to minimize the differences between herself and the native girls she found it necessary to become fluent in their language and to participate in local customs. Although she relied mostly on observations she also used intelligence tests, a questionnaire that she made up, and interviews in the native language (Mead, 1961). Her methods were adapted as she saw the need.

Other linguistic anthropologists (Boas, Sapir and Whorf cited in Hymes 1983) who have closely examined the relationship between language and culture found, as Mead did, that they are very closely tied; one cannot be studied without the other (Hymes 1983).

Ethnographies are a flexible means of gathering data. Ethnographers enter the field with an open mind and in a sense keep their research methodology open-ended (Guthrie, 1984).

Since our culture and language are integral parts of who we are, researchers need to find a means of separating themselves from the observations we make. Agar (1980) states that it is easier to make a comparison of cultures than to work within our own culture. "The cross-cultural perspective is a critical part of anthropology" (Agar, 1980, p. 21). Margaret Mead's work is an example of this.

However, anthropologists have also struggled with the problem that this type of study incurs. How does the researcher understand the unfamiliar culture? The exact problem is that the researchers can only experience what they observe through their own cultural experience. They can only interpret what they have heard in interviews through their own knowledge of language. Schutz (1967) says, "Now whenever I have an experience of you, this is still my own experience" (Schutz, 1967, p. 102). Thus begins a kind of `tug-of-war' in terms of researcher involvement. To keep at a distance is to risk a chance of not understanding, but to `go native' means the risk of losing the role of social scientist. Real ethnography involves some of both (Agar, 1980).

Jean Briggs in `Kapluna Daughter' (Briggs, 1970) talks about some of the problems she encountered while living with an Eskimo community and undergoing this `tug-o-war' with three roles: anthropologist, `daughter' in her host family, and foreigner. These roles were made difficult by conflicts between her interpretation, her hosts' interpretation and her personal needs. Her role as an anthropologist was complicated in part because of her need for professional working space. This was not understood nor easily accepted by her host family. As a result, miscommunication led to isolation. In addition, her status as a woman or daughter in the family led to conflicts that she had with her own need to be independent and her accustomed ability to make decisions. To her `daughter' meant one thing and to her host family it meant quite another. Once again, this isolated her from her family, but also the community. The covert tensions that she describes in this article demonstrate the fact that, in spite of her efforts to do otherwise, she remained an outsider looking in. These tensions unconsciously kept her from focusing on her work. It wasn't until the end of her stay that she was able to communicate effectively about these difficulties with her host family. The result was that for most of her stay there was a constant pull between her needs and her ability to live up to the expectations of the culture she was studying.

Phenomenologists have sought to overcome this problem by using in-depth interviewing techniques (Schuman, 1982; Seidman, 1983). Several interviews are conducted with participants over a period of time. The focus of these interviews is biographical, current, and reflective. Schuman did this in a study with 8 interviews over several months (Schuman, 1982) while Seidman used 3 interviews over a period of weeks (Seidman 1983). In-depth interviewing requires a relationship with the participants. "We assumed that any process of knowing and understanding demanded a relationship between those who wanted to know and what they wanted to know about" (Seidman, 1983, p. 18). The interviewers asked as few questions as possible in order to give participants an opportunity to tell their story. Questions asked were generated at the time in order to clarify or expand what the participant said. All the interviews were tape recorded and transcribed word for word so that findings could reflect the exact words used by the participants (Schuman, 1982; Seidman 1983). Seidman found that writing these findings in the form of a profile was a useful way of looking at the information without the complexity of the researcher's own (cultural bias) understanding affecting the story. Schuman (1982) said, "real people must appear real; they must be seen in their own settings, as active, living, breathing individuals" (Schuman, 1982, p. 40).

Ethnography offers two theoretical frameworks, not distinct but rather, intertwined in their application. Participant-observation provides us with information from the participants' natural environment. Researchers can observe and record behavior while participating in the setting as Margaret Mead did. The participants become observers as well as informers when they are asked questions to clarify or explain what the observer sees. These informal interviews provide researchers with first-hand commentary about what is happening (Spradley, 1980). The second framework involves the use of interviewing skills as in the phenomenological research described above. Researchers develop relationships with participants over a long period of time but use formal interviews to gain their information. While the first method can be used to describe a culture or language, the second technique can be used to talk about the experience of an event or series of events from the perspective of the individual involved.

The use of ethnographic research techniques has been recommended for researchers studying the process that occurs during reading.

> Considering the powerful results of ethnographic approaches to spoken language, students of reading may want to take a cue from anthropologists and linguists and study written language in its social context. An ethnographic approach to studying reading may clarify greatly why and how some children learn to read and others do not (McDermott, 1977, p. 154).

This notion is supported by Wilson who says "...the social scientist cannot understand human behavior without understanding the framework within which the subjects interpret their thoughts, feelings, and actions" (Wilson, 1977, p. 249). Two basic principles underlie the above assumption. First that the context of a given situation affects the behavior, and second that the behavior itself may mean something different than what it appears to be. While a reader may appear to comprehend text, he/she may in fact be performing for a teacher by repeating what he/she knows the teacher wants to hear. Observing the behavior of a child in a reading group or in silent reading does not indicate how much or what the child has understood. This can only be done by asking the child to talk about the text.

Approach to This Study

This study was designed to evaluate the cultural relevancy of the Dr. Bird Reading Series by examining the responses of children and teachers in grades 4 - 6 to questions about the story content, illustrations and language in the books, and by interviewing authors and artists about their intentions in producing the stories. For the purpose of this study a qualitative technique has been chosen to allow flexibility in the type of responses. Qualitative interviewing encourages the use of open-ended questioning. This allows the researcher to reword or recreate questions. In my case, it would allow me to adjust my language when I thought it interfered with the student's comprehension of the question. It also provided me with an opportunity to restate or expand questions for clarification. In this way, I examine whether the questions can be asked in a comprehensible manner in spite of my foreignness. Chapter Three offers a discussion of this qualitative methodology.

Chapter Four includes an ethnographic description of my adaptation to the Jamaican culture and language and a description of my entry into school life in Jamaica. It examines my ability to eliminate bias caused by my foreignness. Chapter Four also includes a discussion of responses by school principals to a quantitative questionnaire that supports their cultural relevancy and indicates how the books are being used.

I describe a pilot study in Chapter Five. In this study I examine my ability to test out my ability to develop trust and understanding of the primary children in grades 4-6. I also complete the initial evaluation of the relevancy of the texts and test out the appropriateness of my questions.

Chapter Six examines the authors' and artists' intentions in producing these books. Why did they use certain stories and characters? Where did the illustration conceptualizations originate? What considerations did they make concerning language in the texts? What did they intentionally use in the books in their efforts to make them relevant and what occurred naturally but not intentionally? What didn't work?

Chapter Seven documents the readers' perceptions of the texts. Does the reader recognize the settings? Are the story schemas familiar? Is the language understandable? Students in grade 4 - 6 are interviewed in three one hour sessions which focus individually on story content, illustrations and language.

The conclusions drawn in Chapter Eight go beyond the original issue of whether the books are culturally relevant to include an examination of the aspects of text that make this possible. Dialect interference is not supported by this research project, but the importance of content that is culturally relevant is very clear.

The research will take place in several stages. The first step taken will be to familiarize myself with the culture, language and school system of Jamaica by volunteering to work in a secondary school. (During this time a quantitative questionnaire was proposed by Olive Forrester at the Ministry of Education and sent out to all primary and all age schools on the island.) Interviews will be arranged at a number of primary and all age schools to assist me in selecting schools for the study. This will be followed by a pilot study to test out my questions and ability to overcome cultural boundaries. Three schools will be selected for the final study. Students from grades 4, 5, and 6 will be selected for small group interviews to examine aspects of story content, language and illustrations and their cultural relevancy to the students. In addition, teachers will be interviewed for their perspective on the relevancy of the books and the overall success of the program. Authors and artists will be interviewed about their contributions to the books. Conclusions from this study will look at the degree of relevancy achieved, how it is achieved and the overall success of the program.

Scope and Limitations

The limitations of the study arise primarily because of the nature of qualitative research. While there are some generalizations in the analysis that examine the relevant aspects of the texts, the specific findings are not generalizable to other Jamaican students or to foreign situations.

Due to the nature of qualitative interviews, the breadth and depth of the interviews vary. Comparisons between grades and schools are difficult to make because the interview situations were so different. The reporting of data reflects this individuality in spite of my attempts to create some standard way of looking at the responses.

The third limitation is created by the fact that I am a foreigner interpreting responses that are made from a cultural perspective different from my own and a dialect that I sometimes did not understand. The use of a tape recorder allowed me an opportunity to go over the interviews several times for clarity, and I asked a Jamaican for assistance with some of the problematic language. But that does not eliminate the fact that my questions may have caused difficulties and my own language may have been misunderstood. A cultural gap kept me apart from my interviewees except at points where an obvious bridge was made.

Significance

The study described in the following chapters is designed to measure the degree of cultural relevancy found in the Dr. Bird Reading Series. Since this set of texts is a first attempt by the Jamaican government to place locally produced materials in the public school classrooms, it offers an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of using these materials to replace the traditional texts from foreign countries. Information gained in this study may well be used by other countries or in other situations to assist them in determining whether they want to devote the time and money it requires to undertake a project of this magnitude. Furthermore, the qualitative methodology used in this study offers researchers an alternative to a quantitative measure of content analysis.

The evaluation of this reading series provides an examination of what aspects (content, language, illustrations) of the Doctor Bird Readers are considered culturally relevant and how the authors/artists were able to achieve this in their work. It further allows for an examination of the aspects for specific elements (characters, events, settings, dialogues, etc.) that the Jamaican students find relevant to their lives.

In addition cross-cultural issues in research can be examined in the effectiveness of the methodology used. This evaluation presents readers with an opportunity to evaluate the experience of conducting research in a culture and environment foreign to their own.

Summary

This chapter sets the scene for the research described in this dissertation. A discussion of the background of the problem is followed by a description of the task at hand. The work is set into a theoretical framework including a discussion of the methodology incorporated in all aspects of the study. I have addressed the limitations of this study as well as its possible significance. Chapter Two will examine related studies in both text analysis and reading. Chapter Three provides an overview of the methodology that is used. Chapter Four describes my entry into the Jamaican culture and my initial involvement with the Ministry of Education. Chapter Five is a pilot study which looks at my questions for their appropriateness. Chapter Six analyzes interviews with the authors and artists to determine their purpose in producing this series. Chapter Seven analyzes interviews with the students and teachers. It examines the end result of the authors' and artists' intentions. Chapter Eight summarizes the findings and then suggest implications for other books projects and further research.

Footnotes

1. Personal names are replaced in this text with pseudonyms except in the case of officials in the Ministry of Education, and the authors, artists editors, and consultants who worked on the Dr. Bird Readers.

2. The LMW series was produced by the University of West Indies School of Education. They were published by Heinemann Caribbean Ltd. and placed in the Jamaican schools starting in 1978.

3. The basilect dialect is the form of local language furthest from Standard English and the acrolect is the closest. (Forrester, undated).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A review of the research in text analysis shows that texts have been analyzed from a number of perspectives but that qualitative techniques have not been implemented to any extent in this research. No studies were found that used a qualitative interview to analyze texts. Reading research incorporates some ethnographic methods but not as an attempt to examine the content of reading texts.

The chapter will follow in two parts: a discussion of content analysis research, and a discussion of related ethnographies in reading research.

Text Analysis Research

The studies in text analysis that I examined focus in the areas of reading and multicultural education. Primarily, a quantitative approach is used to examine the content, language and illustrations of texts, and of children's literature. Research questions are quite varied. A number of these studies will be reviewed and checklists that were reviewed are described in this section.

Bader (1981) examines the possibility that story thema may effect achievement potential as it influences the values of readers. She specifically examined materials intended for poor readers. The investigator and two assistants selected stories randomly from eleven high interest low level reading series to determine the effect of story thema on readers. Most of the stories focused on middle class, white male characters. The results indicate that the motivation provided in materials for poor readers varies a great deal from text to text. Badar recommends that educators review story content carefully for this factor.

Other researchers have focused on, the quantity and quality of metadiscourse found in reading texts (Crismore, 1983) and the relationship between readability and reader interest (Gillen, 1977; Quereshi, 1977; and Stang,1975). The presence and quality of political and national norms were examined in other analyses (Brams, 1980; Klebacher, 1984; Novak, 1978).

Closer to the question of relevancy were studies that looked at sexual and racial bias in texts. Issues of sexual bias were examined by Henderson and Kalia (Henderson 1978; Kalia 1980). Henderson examined textbooks to determine the relationship between text and reality. She found that frequently there are no urban children, ghetto children, working mothers or divorced parents in the texts. She concludes" Overall findings of the content analysis, then, suggest that the picture of reality portrayed in early texts does not reflect realities which are consonant with those experienced by most readers, particularly urban readers" (Henderson, 1978, p. 9).

Kalia (1980) examined 41 Indian textbooks for sex-role equality. She counted male and female characters and examined their roles in the texts. She found that the language was male-centered, that traditional sex-roles persisted, women were treated derogatorily as victims who relinquished their power to men. She concludes "The messages given to school children in the Indian textbooks sanction the dominance of men" (Kalia, 1980, p. S223).

Adams (1981) did a study to determine the amount of literature available that provides a positive representation of culture. She based her study on the assumption that "home and community influences mold and shape the way in which a child perceives words, establishes relationship patterns, learns to communicate, and forms fundamental values and attitudes"(Adams, 1981, p. 1). Her concern was that books should reflect a positive image of the children who read them. She set out specifically to examine children's books to determine if there were books of `accepted literary quality' that also portrayed a multicultural perspective. Her definition of books that contain representation of multicultural groups is based on the assumption that representation means actual presence in a positive characterization of that culture. Graduate students used a checklist to verify their findings. Of the 57 books that were evaluated 21 proved to be acceptable. Her findings were that there were books of `accepted literary quality' that did offer positive multicultural representation.

Klebacher draws on the assumption that there is "a definite correlation between background experience and comprehension" (Klebacker, 1984, p. 12). She used fourth, fifth and sixth grade basal reading books for this study. Two hundred ninety-one stories were examined for specific data reflecting socio-economic factors, sex and nationality. The stories were recorded and charted to identify these factors. Her conclusion is that "Basal authors and publishers are including few stories that deal with the kinds of ongoing problems and situations faced by children from low socioeconomic backgrounds" (Klebacker, 1984, p. 28).

The Michigan State Board of Education (1984) published a report of a review of eighth grade U.S. History Books. In this study a steering committee of the State Board of Education and some teachers were asked to review books that principals said they were using in schools. They were looking for multicultural representation and representation of special groups such as the gifted, talented and handicapped population. This committee found that the books did attempt to portray a pluralistic society but that the effort was not adequate in all respects. Evidence of omission, stereotypes, distortions and bias was found. In particular there were deficiencies in the way that American

Indians, Hispanics, bilingual and handicapped persons were treated. Another area of concern was that international perspectives were underrepresented. In conclusion, however, the researchers cited the educational soundness of the books with room for improvement.

While these textbook evaluations give the analysts information about what they think should be in the text and allows them to make decisions regarding their own perceptions of the materials included, it does not reflect what the readers themselves see in the text. These studies examined the content of the texts but they did not evaluate the reader's relationship to that content.

The closest attempt to evaluate a reader's relationship to the content of text is portrayed in Rudine Sim's (1982) analysis of Afro-American literature. She examines several levels of Afro-American literature in Shadow and Substance. She has divided books into three basic areas: those that are intended to develop social conscience; those that portray a melting pot theory; and those that are culturally conscious. In the first two cases she points out that the books were written primarily for White audiences. In the last case writers are writing to the Afro-American audience. In Sims' evaluation of Afro-American children's literature she examines the use of language, the content, and the illustrations to portray the Afro-American image of the characters in the books.

In the socially conscious books she finds that the characterizations of Blacks used may depict stereotypes such as "the Black shiny face" (Sims, 1982, p. 23) which Sims points out is in Lions in the Way. She finds that nonstandard English tends to be used to represent Black speakers, but objects to the fact that only the Black characters are allowed to use dialect. The perspective from which these books are written fails to present a positive image of Afro-American characters. The story content is an attempt to include Blacks in literature but as Sims points out "the literary quality of many of them is poor enough to suggest that had they not been timely, they might not have been published at all" (Sims, 1982, p. 30).

In the melting pot books Sims points out that writers attempt to treat all people equally. "However, Americans have not been homogenized in the melting pot and are not all culturally interchangeable like the standardized components that make mass production possible" (Sims, 1982, p. 33). In these books all differences between people are ignored except for skin tone. As a result most of them are picture books, but without the illustrations one wouldn't know the color of the character's skin. The content focuses on universal topics that do not relate to specific cultural themes. The language in these books focuses on standard English. Black English is ignored making the homogeneity of characters stronger. While she finds that there is more literary value, particularly due to the quality of the illustrations, she also finds that they do not represent a genre of literature that tells the Afro-American experience.

The third group of literature about Blacks that Sims examines in her study she calls culturally conscious fiction. She says, "These books come closest to constituting a body of Afro-American literature for children" (Sims, 1982, p. 49). She points out that this group of books uses not only texts but also illustrations to portray an Afro-American experience. She finds elements of text, language and description that reflect Afro-American characters in a positive and realistic manner. Black English may be used in both dialogue and narration. The authors talk to the Afro-American child in most cases instead of talking about them.

The culturally conscious books indicate an attempt by authors and publishers to publish work with an Afro-American perspective that is written for the Afro-American child. One of the essential points that Sims makes is that the most effective writing for Afro-American children has been done by Afro-American authors and artists.

The study conducted by Sims involved the author as reader and evaluator of the texts described in this text. Instead of examining the books from a distance she became actively involved in the process. She read the texts herself and reacted as a reader might to the texts. It is this reaction that has allowed her to group the books and report her findings.

Checklists Reviewed

I reviewed a number of guidelines for evaluating texts. These were designed to measure multicultural perspectives in textbooks. They do this primarily in a quantitative way on a variety of checklist forms.

The Council on Interracial Books for Children produced four checklists.

1."Bias in Children's Story books", in Human (and Anti-Human) Values in Children's Books, 1976;

This article looks at the morals and values that books carry for children. It looks at racism and sexism as part of an overwhelming concern for the presentation of positive human values including materialism and conformism. The "Story Book Rating Instrument" that follows gives the evaluator the opportunity to check the appropriate boxes in terms of inappropriate art or inappropriate words. A general evaluation of literary, artistic, and cultural quality is left to the reader's interpretation after reading the introductory comments.

2."Guidelines for Selecting Bias-Free Textbooks and Storybooks", 1979;

This is a lengthy checklist with an introduction that defines each topic. The guidelines are divided into sections that examine bias in general, sexism, and racism. Sexist books are examined in four categories: characterization, language and terminology, historical background and illustrations. Five areas are examined for racism: characterization, language and terminology, historical accuracy, cultural authenticity and illustrations. Each section describes what the author considers to be inappropriate material or presentation. The questions in each section are clearly defined and require a yes/no response. However, the reader must interpret the fine details of questions like: "Are there a variety of positive Black role models for both sexes?" or "When there is interplay between white and Afro-American characters, is the viewpoint of the minority characters as clear to readers as is the viewpoint and values of whites?"(Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1979, p. 47) At the end of this text there are seven quick checklists that are based on the introductory material. They are quantitative in nature or require simple yes/no responses. The evaluator is given no specific criteria for determining the quality of the text so interpretation of the results is left open to the researcher.

3."Stereotypes, Distortions and Omissions in U.S. History Textbooks", 1977; Seven checklists follow an introduction of the concerns that these guidelines address: perspective, inclusion, status, and underlying assumptions are examined. Examples of what the author considers to be evidence of textbook bias are provided before the checklists. Each checklist has a number of criteria and the responses are given values from -2 (incorrect information) to +2 (full information. The checklist gives specific events that the evaluator must check for in reading the history texts. A score is reached at the end of each checklist but interpretation is left open to the evaluator.

4."10 Quick Ways to Analyze Children's Books for Racism and Sexism". This checklist has ten general characteristics they encourage the evaluator to examine including stereotypes in the illustrations, racist and sexist attitudes in the story line, loaded words (implies an offensive tone), socioeconomic conditions in the story, relationships between people and the authors. However, there is little in the way of specifics and so the interpretation of the checklist is left open entirely to the evaluator.

In addition, three independent checklists were also examined.

1.A Model for Evaluating Traditional U.S. History Books, by Dr. Mack Morant (1982).

The introduction of this set of checklists uses an evaluation of pictures and illustrations to define inclusion, stereotypes and exclusions in history texts. The material covered here deals particularly with Afro-American history. The forms include a data sheet which details the particulars of the book that is being evaluated; a comparative analysis which examines a specific group of Black and White people that the author considers important in history; an exercise that includes examining the illustrations, contrasting history books according to their dates, and a comparison of the number of people of each race. The last exercise is a list of `discussion' questions that the author asks for a yes/no response with questions.

2."Evaluate Your Textbooks for Racism, Sexism", by Max Rosenberg (1973).

This checklist has twenty criteria that examine the content and illustrations. This evaluation looks for positive attributes that the author considers important: sensitivity to stereotypes, portrayal of diverse racial and ethnic groups in a positive manner, realistic portrayal of sexual, racial religious and ethnic groups. While the checklist can be valued for its positive approach it also leaves the evaluator to do a great deal of the interpretation.

3. "How to find and measure bias in textbooks" by David Pratt (1972)

The checklist was considered because of the high validity (77.2 in English and 86.6 in French Canadian) and reliability (.755) computed with a test and retest score. In addition, the evaluation requires specific training and cross-checking of information. The procedure includes an examination of words which evaluate characters in a positive or negative manner. A score sheet is provided and a list of typical words that carry value judgments. This measurement was considered for this study because I felt that it would act as a check on the qualitative responses I would receive through interviews. While I was excited by the possibilities of this as a means of checking my own interpretation of the children's qualitative analysis of the texts, I dropped it because this checklist would require value judgments about the Jamaican culture on the part of the researcher that I did not feel qualified to make.

Examining the instrument above helped me to define the types of information that would support a finding for culturally relevant materials. They also helped me to break my own questioning into categories which looked at content, language and illustrations. Having studies these was useful when it cam time for me to write my own questions for the interviews.

Ethnographies in Reading Research

Ethnography can become an important tool in reading research. Through observation and participation the researcher can get an inside view of what happens that affects the reading process both at home and in school.

By examining the following studies I was able to develop an understanding of some of the problems I might encounter in using qualitative techniques for my own study. I was particularly interested in the issues of studying another culture, looking at language, using observation and interviewing techniques for examining children's response to books.

Shirley Brice Heath's study (1983) of children from two working class communities provides us with information about what happens at home to affect the reading process at school. She looked at what materials and activities influenced reading at home. She became a participant in the community. "I became a part of the communities and schools...I was both ethnographer of communication focusing on child language and teacher trainer" (Heath, 1983, p. 1). One of the important elements of her study was to be understanding of the roles of culture in these communities. She states that she feels that her experiences as a child growing up in nearby communities prepared her for this role. In addition she spent time visiting the textile mills, working as a teacher-aide or as a co-teacher in schools. Between 1969 and 1978, "I lived, worked and played with the children and their families and friends in Roadville and Trackton" (Heath, 1983, pg. 5). There were two ways that Heath used to validate her information. She used students in her graduate courses and some pre-school teachers to act as partners in her research. They were able to compare notes and determine any possible conflicts over interpretation of data.

Denny Taylor (1983) examines the effect that parents have on their children's literacy. She examined both the parents' own history of literacy but also how they influenced their children's literacy in their daily lives. Although Taylor did not participate in the lives of her families, she did visit frequently and establish a long-term relationship with them. "I attempted to be both friend and inquisitor, insider and outsider in a foreign land" (Taylor, 1983, p. 104). As a native of Britain, the United States represented a `foreign land'. Taylor used audiotapes of the bedtime stories, fieldnotes and feedback from parents on children's writing. Much of this information, including some of the audio tape recordings came from the parents. "I tried to reassure the families that the information they gave me was important" (Taylor, 1983, p. 108).

Janet Hickman (1981) conducted a study of children in elementary school to look at their response to literature. This study uses observation as a primary source of information. "I borrowed from the methods of ethnography and became a full-time participant-observer in an elementary school"(Hickman, 1981, p. 344). In addition to descriptive notes and anecdotal records Hickman used tape recordings of discussions and individual interviews, and copies of art work and writing to show the relationship these had to literature. Non-structured interviews with teachers, a library aide, various staff members and some children were used to check preliminary judgments and perceptions of the researcher.

In a study by Tom Nicholson (1984), New Zealand high school students were asked to talk about their experiences coping with reading demands in their content classes: Math, English, Science and Social Studies. The main technique used was interviewing. He conducted what he calls, `concurrent interviewing'. "This idea when applied to interviews conducted in the classroom during lesson time, would enable the observers to talk to pupils as they worked at their desks" (Nicholson, 1984, p. 439). As the researcher talked to the students during lesson time, conversations were tape recorded. Problems with this method involved noise in the classroom, the difficulty of hand holding a microphone and the determination of questions. "The most difficult aspects of interviewing were to ask `good' questions and to know when to say nothing" (Nicholson, 1984, p. 438). Information that was gathered was cross-checked with a research assistant to make sure that the student's own strategies were being elicited, and the classroom teachers were given the transcripts to read and approve for `public' release.

It is clear from the work done in Heath's study that becoming a part of the community can be a major advantage in gaining the trust and in understanding the events of that community. Taylor demonstrates the value of encouraging participation in data collection from participants and developing an interactive relationship with them. This helped her to establish trust and a means for cross-referencing information. Hickman's study is an example of how good observation of body language and action can lead to conclusions about responses to a given situation. On the other hand, Nicholson has used open-ended interviews to attempt to get `real' information ~~from h~~is participants. He shows how important flexibility is in a process of ethnographic interviewing as well as describing some of the problems of doing tape recording in the classroom. All of the above studies include evidence of the importance of having some means of cross-referencing information that is gathered by the researcher.

All of the above are examples of how ethnographic study can benefit the field of reading education.

A variety of information collecting techniques were used including observation and interviewing, but none of the research specifically was looking at the children's own perceptions of the meaning of their texts.

Conclusions

This chapter has examined related literature in both the fields of text analysis and ethnographies of reading research. The text analysis studies point out the importance of having positive, relevant materials for students. The ethnographies indicate that qualitative analysis can produce results that will benefit the future of reading research. The text analysis lacks the perspective of the child reader and the ethnographic reading research focuses on the process of learning rather than content. The study presented in the following chapters will focus on the child reader's perspective in evaluating the content of the texts for relevancy.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology for this study which was primarily qualitative in approach with the addition of quantitative measures in a preliminary survey instrument. The discussion of the methodology will be presented in three parts: first, a definition of the research methodologies; second, a discussion of the need for the types of methodology used in this study; and third, a description of the procedures that have been adapted for the study. The last section will be further divided into four areas:

1. The quantitative questionnaire
2. The use of participant observation as a means of gathering background knowledge of the Jamaican culture
3. The procedures used in interviewing the children and the teachers
4. The procedures used in interviewing the artists and authors.

Definitions

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research methodology involves a research plan that is highly structured. It is characterized by the use of operational definitions, objectivity in collecting data, replicability of the results, and the notion that there is some cause that can be determined for the events that are recorded. It uses a fixed measurement and generally works as a means to test a hypothesis. The procedures used are specifically defined so that results can be recorded in a quantitative analysis (Bryman, 1984).

One of the most common means of conducting quantitative research is to use a survey. Bryman (1984) tells us that the survey questionnaire is the preferred instrument for many quantitative researchers.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research, on the other hand, allows for more flexibility. The research plan develops as the research progresses, no hypothesis is predetermined, the exact results are generally not replicable, and the results are not explained as the product of some specific cause. Instead, participants are observed or interviewed in their own environment. The explanation for their actions or thoughts is interpreted by the participants themselves and then recorded by the researcher.

One aspect of qualitative research is ethnographic fieldwork. In this instance "the anthropologist (researcher) goes to where people live and `does fieldwork'" (Spradley, 1980, p. 3). Ethnographic fieldwork is based largely on naturalistic observation during which the researcher becomes immersed in the lives of the participants. McDermott describes this as, "an attempt to describe a group's methodology; that is an attempt to describe the procedures natives use to make sense of each other and hold each other accountable to certain culturally sensible ways of behaving" (McDermott, 1977, p. 162). The researcher must determine the meaning of the behaviors, events and situations that occur. Seidman confirms that "Participant observation places the burden of constructing meaning almost totally on the observer" (Seidman, 1985, p. 14).

Another means of conducting qualitative research is the ethnographic interview. The ethnographic interview allows the researcher to find out `why' as well as `what' the participant behavior is. "An informal ethnographic interview occurs whenever you ask someone a question during the course of participant observation" (Spradley, 1980, p. 123). Hyman (1954) describes the purpose of the interview in this way: "To find out a person's thoughts one must sometimes ask him a question" (Hyman, 1954, p. 17). This type of information gathering can be done in both a formal and informal setting. Formal interviews are conducted at a specific time and place. In this study both formal and informal interviews are used.

The advantages of using ethnographic techniques over a quantitative procedure are important for the study."By design, naturalistic observations (such as participant observation) and ethnographic interviews, with their inherent responsiveness to immediate phenomena under investigation, extend far beyond what can be learned from employing standard protocols or standardized questions" (Wolf and Tymitz, 1977, p. 10). The results are specific to a given situation including environment, time and mood of the interview and allows greater researcher bias than in a quantitative methodology, but the ability to probe the unknown is invaluable in an attempt to understand the perceptions of the participants.

Development of a Methodology

A quantitative methodology was selected to provide the Ministry of Education with information requested by Mrs. Forrester, Head of the Core Curriculum Program. The survey instrument was chosen because the questions could be mass produced and sent through the mail to the seven hundred primary schools on the island. The responses could be collated quickly and the Ministry would have a summary of responses in a short period of time. The design of this questionnaire was developed in coordination with Mrs. Forrester in order to get a quick response to specific questions regarding distribution and use of the books. This type of evaluation was important to the continuation of the book project. No other survey of this sort had been conducted. (See Appendix D)

A qualitative methodology was selected for the remainder of the study. The use of observation and interviews offered me an opportunity to gather data that extended beyond my original questions.

First, I developed an extensive background knowledge of the culture through ethnographic observation. By observing events, actions and language I learned some of the cultural characteristics and perspectives that would be expressed in the interviews. I used this knowledge in order to interpret what occurred during the interviews, formulate new questions and determine if expansion of the interviews was necessary on any given point. This background information also provided a base of knowledge that I used to translate the interviews into meaningful statements during analysis.

Second, I used interviews to discover how the Dr. Bird Readers are perceived by the children and teachers who use the books in school. Children were interviewed in small groups and asked questions about the content, illustrations and language in the books. The interviews took three days, one for each topic of discussion.

Third, interviews were used again to collect information from the authors and artists about their roles and goals relating to the book project. Authors and artists were contacted by telephone and individual interviews were arranged.

These interviews encouraged individual expression and allowed for flexibility in responses as well as questioning. The ethnographic observations are summarized in chapter 4 and the interviews are described in chapters 5,6, and 7.

Procedures

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed for the purpose of providing a survey of the schools to determine who was using the books and how they were being used. Olive Forrester, Head of the Core Curriculum Unit at the Ministry of Education in Kingston, requested this as a means of securing some preliminary information about the use of the books. There had been no previous study to determine what happened to the books once they were placed in the schools.

The questionnaire began with a short letter introducing my project and requesting assistance from the principals. This letter was signed by Mr. Dodd, a Ministry of Education official, in order to affirm that the project had Ministry support. This was followed by a series of short answer questions about the school, the distribution of the books and the use of the books. In addition, two open-ended questions followed to determine what the schools found to be of positive and negative value in the series. In order to assure the greatest response possible these questionnaires were printed with a stamped, return addressed portion.

The responses to the questionnaire are reported in quantities which are then translated into percentages to show areas of strength and weakness in the use and distribution of the books. The breadth of the responses to open-ended questions was examined as well as the sum. In this way I was able to investigate responses that specifically referred to the question of relevancy as well as to other aspects of the books.

The Ethnographic Study

The study was designed so that I would become familiar with the Jamaican culture, in specific, to acquire knowledge of the Jamaican dialect, to develop a working understanding of the public school system, and to develop a relationship with members of the Ministry of Education. In addition, I would learn to live within the different social structures of the Jamaican society and to abide by its social parameters. The first year and a half I was in Jamaica I was primarily involved in this ethnographic experience even though I was also involved in producing the questionnaire and setting up the interviews.

I followed the example suggested by Spradley (1980) for setting up this part of my research. According to Spradley the process used in ethnographic observation follows a cycle that is repeated over and over. The cycle begins with the selection of an ethnographic project in which the researcher decides what it is he/she wants to observe. This is followed by asking ethnographic questions to determine who was there, their physical and demographic descriptions and what they did. Descriptions of events and personal reactions to events are recorded, and the environment of the observation and any environmental influences would be noted as well. These are noted in written fieldnotes, photographs, maps and any other appropriate records. After each period of record keeping the notes are analyzed in order to determine the next step in the ethnographic project and to note additional questions. Each period of observation builds on the previous ones. The last task in the cycle is the writing of the information into an ethnography. During this last step the researcher takes on a role as a translator. He/she must report cultural events in a way that would be meaningful across cultures. He/she must make sense of one culture in terms of another culture (Spradley 1980). "The more fully you apprehend and digest the cultural meaning system operating in the social situation you study, the more effective your final translation...Your second task is to communicate the cultural meanings you have discovered to readers who are unfamiliar with that culture or cultural scene" (Spradley, 1980, p. 161). It is important to report the specifics of the observation rather than to try to discuss generalities (Spradley, 1980). The researcher tries to paint a picture through words of the experiences he/she has had in the environment. However, the picture can never tell the complete story so, "At best an ethnography can only be partial" (Agar, 1980, p. 41).

I selected an area of the island in which to live and was able to secure housing with a Jamaican family. This family was involved in running a mini-bus and in farming. Most of my neighbors ran small shops or were farmers. At the same time I volunteered in a secondary school which would allow me constant language practice and also insight into the functioning of schools within this society. Later, I lived in another small rural community not far from the school. At this point I lived alone as a member of a society in a small housing scheme. My neighbors were teachers, police and other professionals. Finally, I moved to the rural-urban community of Montego Bay. I traveled frequently to Kingston, the largest urban center on the island. My life was a constant immersion in the culture, every experience an experience in qualitative observation.

Records were kept in fieldnotes, letters, photographs, school logs, and on a tape recorder. My analysis of the day was constant but often done informally. Much of the time I was not aware of the process through which I was going.

Chapter Three is a descriptive analysis that examines the changes that I went through as a researcher while learning about the Jamaican culture and while learning the language. It also details events that had significant effect on the course of the study. In this chapter I will use my field notes, letters and recollections to recreate pictures of the environment and cultural experiences that effected the results of this study.

The Student/Teacher Interview

I adopted a marketing research methodology for the interview design. Pope's (1981) methodology for marketing research provided me with a simple structure and a logic to follow in developing a questioning strategy.

In Pope's methodology the questionnaire begins with a section of qualifying questions. The purpose for this section is to develop interest in the subject, build rapport and provide easy-to-answer questions. In this phase the respondent is sure of success in his/her answers. The next section includes the basic questions about the topic. This part of the questionnaire includes both open- and close-ended questions. The open-ended questions allow for follow-up by probing and clarifying, while the close-ended questions ask for a simple pre-determined answer. The third and final section includes what Pope calls demographic information. He recommends that this be placed at the end because he says that it is most sensitive (Pope, 1981).

I did follow Pope's basic structure, but I also reorganized it to meet my needs. I began with the demographic information because it could be done individually and I felt that this would allow me some time to get to know the students who would be involved in the study. It provided me with an opportunity to get to know some facts about their lives and to try to be more personal than I could be in a group interview.

The group interview followed the first two sections Pope suggested but I added a third section. In the first section I asked questions about the use of the books and the titles the students had read. In the second section I asked questions specifically relating content, language and illustrations to the lives of the children. I used a mixture of open- and close-ended questions which I found helpful in getting students to respond thoughtfully. The close-ended question often introduced the topic while the open-ended question let the student tell his/her own perceptions without being interrupted. The last and final section was used to bring closure to the interview by asking the students to reflect on the text and make suggestions for revisions that they thought would improve the books.

In addition to using the format Pope suggested for writing a questionnaire, I also followed suggestions that he makes for evaluating the success of the questionnaire as you proceed. He suggests that the pilot study interview people as similar to the actual subjects as possible and that the situation be as close to the real interviewing situations as possible. Further, he suggests that the success of this be evaluated in terms of the following questions:

1. Does the questionnaire flow naturally and conversationally?
2. Are the questions clear and easy to understand?
3. Can the questionnaire format be followed by interviewers?
4. Do the respondents seem to understand what they're being asked? Can they answer the questions easily? (Pope, 1981, p. 78).

Pope suggests that the interview invites an opportunity for the researcher to show exhibits and to collect information based on observation. Citing the flexibility and versatility of the personal interview Pope says, "You can do almost anything.. (The personal interview is) most often effective for getting detailed attitude and opinion information" (Pope, 1981, p. 28).

I tested the student interview first in a pilot study. Interviews were divided into three sessions. The first part dealt with questions about content. The second dealt with illustrations and the third dealt with questions about language. While specific questions were changed after this testing situation, the basic format described above was kept throughout the rest of the study. (See Chapter Five for a description of the pilot study and Chapter Seven for a description of the student/teacher interviews.)

The student interviews were analyzed descriptively first by looking at the students themselves through the results of the individual demographic interviews and information gathered from their teachers and principals. This process was not conducted with the teachers due to time constraints.

The information that was gathered in group interviews involved the books themselves. These results were organized by question in order to examine the issues that I selected as indicators of cultural relevancy or indicators of a lack of relevancy. The analysis is completed by examining direct quotes from the interviews for examples that support the findings.

Author/Artists Interview

The purpose of interviewing the authors and artists was to discover what cultural experiences they brought to the books and what they intended to project in their work. To achieve this I borrowed from Seidman's research model of phenomenological interviewing. The purpose of this interview technique he says is "in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 1985, p. 15).

Seidman's model begins by considering the initial contact made with a subject. The purpose of this was to introduce and explain the nature of the work. This contact was made by the researcher because as Seidman said, "Third parties could not understand or communicate fully the nature of our work" (Seidman, 1983, p. 643). This is done by being explicit about the intentions of the research: Who the researcher is; what the purpose of the research is; and how the material gathered is going to be used (Seidman, 1983). During this initial visit these intentions were shared and consent of the participant was requested in writing.

In Seidman's study the interview took place in three sessions: 1. A history of their lives prior to the project; 2. A description of their work on the project; and 3. A reflection on the work that was done (Seidman, 1983). Three to seven days intervened between interviews.

The role and influence of the researcher play a very great part in the consideration for using this type of research methodology. It is the role of the researcher to listen while the participant does the talking. Open-ended questions are used to encourage the participant to talk freely. As little interference from the researcher as possible is encouraged in order to eliminate a bias that would be projected through the researcher's questioning. In addition, the interviews are tape-recorded to avoid researcher interpretation and to allow the researcher to devote full attention to the participant. Seidman points out that, "who we are and what we say affects what we will hear" (Seidman, 1983, p. 659). The tape recorder and use of exact words in the reporting of the interview will eliminate some of the possible bias that Seidman suggests. Another result of tape recording is that the researcher can focus on developing a relationship of trust with the participant. Both participant and researcher accept responsibility for what occurs.

I adopted the basic format of Seidman's interviews. During an initial contact by the researcher the project was explained. In most cases, however, this contact was made over the telephone so it was not until the first interview that written consent was received. In the first of my interviews I focused on autobiographical information that related to the production of the books. The second interview centered on the actual work, and the third interview dealt with a reflection on the project. In some cases these interviews had to be accomplished in one session. In other cases I was able to do them over several weeks. It depended very much on the availability of the participants.

The type of questions used during the interview varied. I used both open-ended and close-ended questions. I would begin with an open-ended question and often followed with clarifying questions. Sometimes these would include close-ended questions, especially if I were interested in probing about a specific title or event.

Analysis of the author/artist interviews included both personal data and references to the books. The purpose of this personal data was to present an examination of the background knowledge and experiences that each of these people brought to the creative process. The analysis of the interviews involving the books attempted to make connections between this background and the books themselves. In addition, the analysis looks at the production procedures to evaluate their affect on the publication. The data in this chapter was reported by summarizing the individual interviews and by using direct quotes from these interviews.

Summary

The methodology selected for this project included a variety of techniques with an emphasis on qualitative analysis.

Quantitative methodology was used in the preliminary study to put the research into island-wide perspective through a survey of all of the Jamaican primary schools. Qualitative methodologies included observations and interviews with participants to provide naturalistic data about the Jamaican culture and perceptions of the participants. Observations were done ethnographically as the researcher became immersed in the culture and lives of the people of Jamaica.

The interviews were both formal types of ethnographic study. In the first instance students were interviewed using open ended questioning about specific topics. In the second instance authors and artists were interviewed to determine the phenomenological nature of their work. These interviews were prearranged and time commitments controlled their length.

The observations were recorded descriptively in notes while records of the interviews were kept verbatim on tapes. This was done to minimize cross cultural communication problems and to provide natural data directly from the participants.

Analysis procedures include quantitative measures and description for the questionnaire, and narrative summaries for the interviews.

The procedures described in this chapter will be further discussed in Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven.

CHAPTER 4

PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES

This chapter contains four sections with information about those activities I performed in preparation for this study. The first section discusses my entry into the culture and society by voluntarily working in a Jamaican Secondary school, as well as my preparations for entry into the schools I would use. It involves developing a relationship with the Ministry of Education over several years.

The second section describes a quantitative questionnaire that was used as a survey to get information about the books from as many schools as possible that used the Dr. Bird Readers.

The third section describes the criteria used to select schools for the study.

The fourth and last section is a descriptive narrative based on my own ethnographic recordings of the events that took place during my initial entry in Jamaican life and that influenced me as researcher in this study.

Preparation for This Research Project

The preparation for this study took place over two and a half years. During this time I developed my methodology and sought financial support for the research. I took this time to create a relationship with Jamaica, in particular with the Ministry of Education. In addition, this period of time provided me with an opportunity to live in Jamaica in order to learn the dialect and to familiarize myself with the culture of the people I would be interviewing.

After deciding on a qualitative methodology I traveled to Jamaica, summer of 1982, to get the permission of the Ministry of Education to do the study.

During my visit at the Ministry of Education in Kingston, Jamaica I met with Pam Morris, Acting Head of the Core Curriculum Unit where The Doctor Bird Readers were prepared. Ms. Morris was kind enough to introduce me to one of the authors, Karl Philpotts, and to give me a set of the books. At this time I first learned that the book project had been funded by O.A.S. (Organization of American States). It was unfortunate that even though I had written ahead no return communication reached me before I arrived in Jamaica. As a result Olive Forrester, who is Head of the Core Curriculum Unit, was not available. However, I was able to get information on the process for getting permission to do the study. In August I called Mrs. Forrester in Boston and we met. She reiterated the steps I needed to take and encouraged me enthusiastically to go ahead with my plans for doing the study. In October, 1982 I received a letter from Ross Murray, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education giving me formal approval for the study.

Throughout my initial contacts with members of the Ministry, I emphasized that I felt it would be important for me to offer something in return for the opportunity to conduct this research. For this reason I adapted my research plans to include a quantitative survey instrument at Mrs. Forrester's request, and made every effort to assist the Ministry with distribution of books. I reported regularly on the progress and results of the research. I also voluntarily conducted workshops on reading instruction for teachers at each of the four research sites and for teachers in adolescent educational programs at the Ministry of Youth.

I felt that it was necessary to spend time in Jamaica prior to the actual study in order to familiarize myself with the culture, the school system, and the language that would be used by the children. All of these would affect my ability to perform as a qualitative researcher because I would not use interpreters from the Jamaican community to assist me in my role.

During the summer of 1983 I communicated with Rosemary Bailey, a remedial English teacher at the Forest Hills Secondary School.[1] I hoped to find work in Green Island at the Forest Hills Secondary School. There were no paid positions I could apply for. She encouraged me to try to come to Jamaica and work as a volunteer in her school tutoring students who were having severe difficulties in reading. In the fall of 1983 I received permission from the school to come and work. This allowed me to begin my study by becoming familiar with the school system and working with Jamaican children. It also provided me with the opportunity to live in a Jamaican household which enabled me to become familiar with the culture. One of the most important results of this experience was that I began to be able to communicate with local people in the Jamaican dialect. I developed a change in the tone of my voice which began to reflect the musical quality I heard in Jamaican conversation and I was able to pick up phrases to use in my dialogues with students and neighbors. I also noted in my field notes that I was able to understand more of the dialect as people spoke to me, but in particular as they spoke to each other.

Further preparations for the study included applying for grant money to support my stay in Jamaica. In August 1984 I received approval for an O.A.S. fellowship.

Another aspect of the actual preparation for doing this study was procuring documentation so that I could get a work permit which would allow me to get a visa for more than six months. This was an interesting problem because I was told that I would not be able to accept a job under the regulations of the O.A.S. fellowship. But, I could not get the visa without a work permit and I could not get the permit unless someone said they were willing to hire me.

The school where I did my volunteer work had asked me to replace Rosemary in the Fall of 1984 while she was on leave for one semester so they wrote a letter stating that they wanted to employ me and I was summarily given the work permit. Once I was given the work permit I felt committed to the school. That is how I came to work voluntarily at the school for a second semester.

The position allowed me to teach classes in grades 7 and 10 on the remedial level. During this time I introduced The Doctor Bird Readers to the grade ten students and asked them to give oral and written evaluations of the stories. The grade ten students were very excited about the books. Their evaluations showed that they liked the stories and found the characters familiar. It is difficult to measure the cause of their motivation, however. Even though it was quite high, other factors come into play. Since the class did not have its own texts the books were the only materials available. Because no two students had the same books the program was completely individualized. Students could work on any book they chose, and each book offered a different story or topic. The class was used to having structured grammar lessons from previous instructors; therefore, the format of instruction was changed. All of these factors may have contributed to the high level of motivation from these students. In spite of their eagerness to read the books, writing the reviews about them was still difficult. Most students wrote very briefly about each one they read and some would not write at all.

During the time I was teaching at Green Island I also was communicating with Olive Forrester from the Ministry of Education in Kingston, and I was making plans for the actual start of the study. She requested that I begin the study with a questionnaire to all the primary schools in Jamaica to get feedback on the books. During the Fall 1984 I prepared and mailed out the questionnaires to the principals of all of the 700 Primary and All Age schools listed in the Directory of Educational Institutions 77-78. (Primary schools include grades K through 6 while All Age schools include students up to grade 8.) It took most of the Spring of 1985 to receive the responses. The second section of this chapter will discuss the specifics of this questionnaire.

While I was accumulating these responses I conducted 24 personal visits. During these visits I used the questionnaire as a guide for an interview with each principal and made observations of individual classes. From these personal visits I recorded information which would assist me in selecting the schools for my study. This selection process is described in section three of this chapter.

Throughout this period of time I kept a diary and wrote lengthy letters home. These written recordings have become the basis for an ethnographic report of the details of events that occurred. They have provided me with an opportunity to examine the process of becoming involved in the Jamaican community, schools, and way of life. These are summarized in section four.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed at Mrs. Forrester's suggestion in the Fall of 1984. It included an explanation of the project at the top, introducing myself as researcher, and the purpose of the study. A section at the bottom contained questions and was to be separated and returned. Each return was addressed to the Ministry in Montego Bay and stamped for the convenience of the principals. (See Appendix D)

The purpose of this questionnaire was to determine what schools had the Dr. Bird Readers and how they were being used. At the same time I wanted to find out what aspects of the books were positive and what aspects were presenting problems.

Data Analysis

A total of 700 questionnaires were sent out to primary schools in the 14 parishes of Jamaica. There were 327 returned by mail. Twenty-four questionnaires were answered on visits to schools, making the total number of responses 351. In seven parishes 50% or more of the questionnaires were returned. Five other parishes responded just below 50%. (See Appendix E)

When I reported the results to Mrs. Forrester in the summer of 1985, she indicated that the quantity of the response had been better than she would have anticipated.

Of the schools that responded 49% had a student-teacher ratio over 40:1, and 44% were below 40:1. Two schools reported ratios as low as 10:1. 7% of the schools did not respond on this question. It is significant however, to note that 24% of the responses showed class ratios over 50:1 and 23% were between 30 and 40:1. In most cases individualized or small group instruction could not occur easily.

Two schools replied (1%) that they did not have the books. Twenty-nine schools (8%) reported that they did not have sufficient supplies of the books. Each child was to have received a set of the books for his/her grade. A list of the schools reporting insufficient supplies was submitted to the Ministry in July 1985 and efforts were made to rectify this in the following school year.

Thirty-eight schools (11%) mentioned concern over the continuation of distribution of the books and ten (3%) of the schools were concerned about the scheduling of distribution.

These problems in distribution were certainly verified in my visits. I personally delivered books to Lucea

Primary, Green Island and Negril Primary Schools. If I had had transportation available I would have been able to deliver more books. When I met with Mrs. Griffiths at the Ministry in Montego Bay early in 1985 there were still a number of schools without their supply of books. Every effort was being made, however, to get them out to rural areas where they were needed.

In regards to the frequency of use, sixty-one schools (17%) said the books were used daily; Two hundred seventy-two (77%) said they were used frequently; And, fourteen (4%) said they were used only 2-3 times a week. The term `frequently' left this question open to interpretation and, therefore, that answer is vague. However, 85% of the schools reported that all of the teachers in grades 4-6 were using the books. By combining the information in these three answers it appears that the books were being used on a regular and frequent basis. This also was verified in my personal observations of the twenty-four schools I visited. This meant I could expect to find children and teachers who could knowledgeably discuss the stories for the purpose of my study.

The books were intended to be used as the main texts for grade 4-6. 97% of the schools said that they used the books for this purpose. In addition the books were used as supplemental readers or for other purposes. 5% of the schools used the books some of the time as supplemental readers without instruction and 19% said they used them as supplemental readers with instruction. 6% of the schools said the books were used for other purposes including: Grade 7 or 8 remedial classes, reference, devotions, and English classes. (These responses about alternative uses came primarily from All Age schools.) While most of the schools used the books as they were designed for use in the regular classroom setting, none of the schools used the books according to their intended use as individualized developmental readers.

Two questions at the bottom of the questionnaire allowed schools to report problems and positive aspects of the books. Since the questions were open-ended I got a large variety of answers. (See Appendix F)

The results of these two questions were recorded in terms of `credits' and `concerns'. The following is a summary of those findings as they relate to this study.

Two aspects of the books that schools were most concerned with were content,-- three hundred twenty-eight (91%) said this was a credit,-- and book format,-- one hundred twenty-eight (36%) said it was a problem.

The reasons for credit given in the area of content included one hundred (28%) schools reporting that they thought the books were `culturally relevant'. (A term elicited spontaneously from schools on this form. However, on the basis of other responses on the questionnaire I took it to mean that the teachers found the books reflected the children's environment and lives.) Another one hundred seven (38%) reported that they were interesting. Other areas of credit included reading level, use of factual information, appropriate vocabulary, and illustrations. The highest sub-group in this category was a response showing that teachers enjoyed the books; two hundred three schools (58%) reported this finding.

The possibility for individualized instruction, the ability to relate the stories to other subject areas, the usefulness of the teaching manual, and the provision for individual ownership of the books were given as positive aspects of the books. Schools also reported that the books provided high comprehension, improved reading and pleasure in reading.

The above responses clearly indicate that teachers and principals feel that the books reflect a positive image of the culture, language and people of Jamaica. Although the Dr. Bird Readers were considered culturally relevant, the specific objective of the textbook project to prepare a developmental reading program was not successful. (See Chapter Six)

Most of the comments reflect credits but there were also concerns lodged about the content of the books. The greatest of these concerns was reported by thirty-seven schools (11%) who reported that the lack of activities in the books was a problem, and twenty-two schools (6%) who reported concern about the suitability of the books for the advanced readers.

In terms of concerns about the book format, seventy-three schools (21%) said they were concerned about the general presentation of the books. Other areas included legibility of print, size of print, legibility of illustrations, lack of color, and quality of paper. These concerns mostly reflect a problem in the printing process itself.

Finally, there was concern over distribution, quantity of books distributed and the continuation of distribution. In the second term of my study most schools indicated that this was no longer a major concern.

The concerns reflect problems in challenging upper level students and frustration of lower level students. In addition, concern over the presentation of the books showed that faulty qualities of the books were noticeable, but not overwhelming. These findings of concern were important in terms of examining the total program but not significant in terms of their quantity, nor did they reflect on the cultural relevance of the books. Since the focus of this study was to determine whether the books reflect a relevant viewpoint of the culture, what matters is that the credits outweigh the concerns.

Findings

From the information received on this questionnaire it is quite clear that the books have been well received in the schools and that many teachers feel that they are culturally relevant to the children. It is also evident that the books are being used in classes and that both children and teachers enjoy them. This initial look indicates that the content, language and illustrations were understandable.

However, the books are not being used as intended. The original proposal for this project shows that the program was developmental. Children were supposed to work on any book at their own level regardless of grade. In the process of production and distribution this was significantly changed so that children were given the books by grade, not level. Interviews with Jeff Schatzman, who was one of the authors of the concept of the Dr. Bird Readers as a textbook project, indicate that proper training of teachers was not done and schools were not aware of this intention. (See Chapter Six) Interviews with teachers confirmed this. Given the number of children in the classes it is easy to see how this evolved naturally. Large groups of children discouraged teachers from individualization, and based on my observations teachers had little time for meetings. Training was difficult because of the large number of schools and the wide distribution in rural areas especially. (This will be further discussed in Chapter Six and Seven.)

These findings support the Ministry of Education study which also showed that the children found the books understandable. (See Chapter One)

Implications for This Study

The responses to the questionnaire by principals and teachers reflected that the content, illustrations and language of the books were relevant to children in grade 4, 5 and 6; and that it was felt the children could relate to these stories out of their own experiences. It was clear from these findings that the focus of the forthcoming study would not need to be so much on whether the books were culturally relevant but what aspects of the content, language and illustrations were specifically relevant and why.

Selection of Schools

I visited twenty-four schools between January and June of 1985 in order to make the selection of three schools for this study. (See Appendix G) The choice of schools was limited by accessibility. I did not have accommodations in Clarendon, Portland, St. Elizabeth or St. Thomas Parishes. (See Appendix H) Local transportation to these parishes was available but the distances from my research base made it impractical for me to take advantage of the transportation, nor could I reach these schools by my motorcycle due to distance and condition of the roads.

I did have accommodations in Manchester, Hanover, St. James, St. Ann and Kingston. Accessibility extended from these locations to Westmoreland, St. Mary, Trelawny, St. Andrew, and St. Catherine.

I was concerned that my visits should include rural schools, rural-urban schools and urban schools. These categories were determined in coordination with Olive Forrester. She suggested that one school in each of these type of environments be represented in the study. That became one of my criteria for selection.

Other criteria became apparent as I made visits. At first I had little idea about what I was looking for in a school. However, as I visited a number of schools it became apparent that there were some in which I could function easily and others that I would have a difficult time in. The following is a list and description of the criteria that I developed in my selection process.

Location of School

Mrs. Forrester and I agreed that there should be one rural, one rural-urban and one urban school. These schools needed to be located where I could find accommodation for a one month's stay and where transportation would not be a major problem.

Demographics

I selected schools on the basis of enrollment that included a variety of social and ethnic populations. I specifically wanted to have a mixture of students from lower, middle and upper socio-economic classes, and representative of the African, Chinese and East Indian ethnicity. These were the dominant ethnic groups in Jamaica (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1982, pg. 36). Other ethnic backgrounds include white and Syrian/Lebanese. These two groups were not represented in the schools I visited.

Interpersonal Relationships

My main concern was how I related to the students. I found in schools where corporal punishment of students was used that children did not converse with teachers as easily as they did in schools where discipline was handled verbally. Also I felt that I would be uncomfortable in a situation that uses corporal punishment. In one school I visited I interrupted a principal who was about to cane a boy. She stopped and let the boy go unpunished. My presence in this situation, I felt, would cause additional tension for the school staff as well as for me. I therefore selected schools where I did not see physical punishment occurring.

I was also concerned that I could establish a working relationship with teachers and the principals. I looked for schools where teachers felt free to talk to me and showed little or no anxiety by my presence in their classes. I looked for principals who felt comfortable allowing me to be on my own during the visit and who would take time to discuss my project with me afterwards. Many of the principals showed a distinct interest in the project and an eagerness to have me work in their schools.

At the end of the visits I narrowed the selection down to four schools: Patience Primary in Manchester, a rural school; Cane Country Primary in Westmoreland, a rural school; Seaside Primary in St. James, a rural-urban school; and Hummingbird All Age in St. Andrew, an urban school. These schools met all of the criteria I used for selection based on my initial visit. All of these schools were easily accessible. I had been able to arrange accommodations in each location. None of them employed corporal punishment and all of them expressed an interest in my project. In my initial interviews at these schools, I sensed no aloofness from either the principal or staff. All of the schools except Patience had a population representing the three major ethnic groups of Jamaica. Patience had students from only African heritage.

As I found out during the study it was impossible to judge during the interview what type of interpersonal relationship would develop between myself and the school staff. In only the pilot situation was I actually able to develop the type of positive working relationship with teachers and principal that I wanted. In the other schools a number of pressures and unforseen circumstances kept me from developing a relationship that was anything more than hospitable. (See Chapter Seven for a discussion of the problems that occurred.)

Because of the convenience of accommodations I selected Patience Primary for the pilot study, to begin in June 1985. The other three schools I selected for the following school year.

I completed the pilot study from May to July 1985. (See Chapter Five.) Although I hoped to begin my actual study in November of 1985, once books had been distributed, I realized that teachers and students would not have had enough of an opportunity to work with the books by that time. I postponed my research visits until Spring term 1986. In the meantime I moved to Kingston and began my interviews with the authors and artists of the project. (See Chapter Six.)

Ethnographic Records

During the preparation for this study I became familiar with the language and culture of Jamaica, and sought the best means to introduce myself to the schools I wished to use for my study.

Introduction

These ethnographic notes of the my first year and a half in Jamaica clearly show the problems and successes of attempting immersion in the local culture. It is evident from these findings that partial admission but not complete acceptance would be possible during the remainder of my stay.

I began immediately to learn about the cultural codes of Jamaica, but the longer I stayed the more there was to know. I had to understand a different socio-economic system. I had to learn the proper way to address people and to speak different levels of dialect according to the socio-economic status of the person. I could learn the basics of the language, enough to get around in most situations. However, I always came across situations where new words or phrases were being introduced. My own spoken use of the language was far behind my ability to understand spoken or written uses of the language.

One of the most important ways I felt I could gain acceptance would have been through sharing meals. However, my inability to eat certain foods made admittance into many situations impossible. I could fit into many of the urban events, but not the rural or ethnic festivities involving food.

I also found that I lacked certain basic survival skills, making it difficult for me to get ready for my professional role. In some situations there was no running water or electricity. In other places the frequent power cuts made working at home after the doors were locked very frustrating and slowed down progress on the research.

I experienced the effects of a society in political turmoil. During the first year and a half, prices increased while workers' pay did not. The result was a series of strikes and protests. While I could share some of the frustrations of the local people, these strikes inhibited the progress of my research and often left me waiting for things to get back to normal.

There were other situations that I shared with Jamaicans, but my inexperience with dealing with them made it difficult for me to progress in my research efforts. The fear that I experienced in the various places I stayed was completely new to me. I felt frustrated and annoyed that I could not move about in the evenings, but must adjust to careful movements during the days. I took a Jamaican with me to the inner city schools when I was not certain of the type of welcome I would receive.

I was frightened by some of the mini-bus drivers. To me their driving was reckless. At times the speed was terrifying. Most Jamaicans did not acknowledge this fear I experienced on the roads. I bought a car and drove myself, even though I felt that it isolated me further from the local people, especially in the country. The choice was one of a sense of well-being over the desire to share experiences. Many of these choices left me feeling isolated and lonely. I wrote about a kind of loneliness I had never known before. The isolation kept me from becoming an integral part of the community as I had hoped and the loneliness further limited my sense of personal power. It often arrested the progress of this research.

In addition, there was a perception held by many of the people I encountered that, because I have a fair complexion and a foreign accent, I was affluent. At times I got more attention than I wanted and other times I was ignored. This only added to my feelings of isolation.

There were many parts of my life in Jamaica where I experienced the same events with the same results. I could appreciate the abundant beauty of the island, the birds, the scenes and even the beautiful weather. I shared the frustrations and inconveniences of the torrential rains. Many of the daily activities became routine for me: shopping in the open market, waiting on and crowding into already overcrowded mini-buses, and timing events around the daily downpours. I learned to adjust to water lock-offs and power cuts. And I learned that when my car broke down there was always an adventure ahead. Often I met very kind people and saw scenes which might otherwise be unavailable. Riding on the train was always an experience I enjoyed because I felt that as the monotonous momentum of the train continued I blended more and more into the picture. I shared the same laughs and worries as the rest of the passengers. When I visited the revivalist church I felt that I was allowed to look in on a way of life both foreign to me and to many Jamaicans. I felt that I shared this experience particularly with the children who surrounded the tent. These shared experiences made partial immersion in the culture possible but not as complete as I had originally hoped for.

In school I also experienced this dichotomy of acceptance. Once I shut the door to my classroom I was able to proceed according to the methods I knew best. For the most part the students accepted the fact that I did things a `little differently'. I made adjustments to the depth of their knowledge of the world and to my ability to communicate. Some activities I learned from them, even though I didn't necessarily agree with them educationally. While I was accepted by the children I did not find the same acceptance from the teachers. I discovered when Rosemary Bailey returned that a good part of the problem was that a rumor had been started about me. I was supposedly `hired' to take a job from a teacher who was going on pregnancy leave.

This was a pretty good indication of what was to come. Children accepted me, everywhere, more easily than the adults. In schools it would be important to get the support of the staff, teachers and principal, early on. The problems with children would result more from miscommunication or an inability to communicate than from a lack of acceptance or mistrust.

In retrospect it is very clear that attempting complete acceptance was not realistic. As I lived day to day I kept up the struggle and was often frustrated. This too affected the progress of my research. I wanted things to go smoothly and when they did not I would get discouraged. I would have to set up a balance between the parts of my life that did fit and the needs of my research. Sometimes I would have to overcome fear, hostility and rejection just to keep going. At these times the pleasures of sharing life in Jamaica would sustain me and keep my research project alive.

The following is a narrative of my experience based on condensed journal entries and letters written from January 1984 through July 1985.

First Impressions

Social Class Differences

It was not an easy process to become assimilated in the Jamaican culture. On my first evening in Montego Bay December 28, 1983 I encountered my first social rebuff. "The man serving me dinner tonight introduced himself as `Brown'. When I tried to call him Mr. Brown, he corrected me." The title "Mr." to me represented a sign of respect; to the working man it meant taking a title given only to the boss. This wasn't the only time that I encountered this conflict with titles but I came to understand it as a differentiation between being oppressed and being an oppressor. "Mr." Brown didn't want the title of his boss because that would seem to equate him with being an oppressor and could cause trouble for him with his fellow workers.

Learning to respect people in their positions was always a problem for me. I wanted to treat all of the `helpers' who did cooking, cleaning and washing as equals, to give them the respect I thought they deserved. But, equality was rejected by them. Their behavior seemed to indicate that they mistrusted their bosses who attempted to give them power. In one instance the `helper' in Kingston was given a great deal of trust by the family she worked for. She was given complete responsibility for running the house and no secrets were kept from her. In the end we discovered that she had on several occasions taken money and that several pieces of linen had disappeared. It hurt all of us very deeply. In fact, what happened in this and other similar situations was that since this type of respect was not familiar, the workers tended to mistrust it. When they were convinced that it couldn't be true they abused or refused it as if to protect themselves from being hurt by it.

Language Differences

An important part of the assimilation into the culture was to become fluent in the Jamaican dialect. My diary clearly shows the struggle this was for me. I often was feeling confident that I was making progress and then noted that I had not made much progress. This in part was due to the fact that the dialect varies greatly from one area of the country to another. On February 14, 1984 I stated, "I notice that I can get around better now. I understand most of what I hear." But later, on March 21, I commented "I still have a lot of trouble understanding people."

I studied the language from a variety of perspectives. When I first went to Jamaica I took down a conversation and discovered that the grammatical structure was different. Object forms of pronouns were used at the beginning of a sentence. "Me soon come". [I will see you later.] "John, him run fas."[John runs fast.] Subjects and verbs did not have to agree. And, words are repeated for emphasis. "De road, dem, windy windy."[The roads have a lot of curves.] While I was staying with the family I lived with in Forest Hills I listened carefully to conversations, but found that I could not grasp a great deal of what was being said. One morning I let the tape recorder run while Ozzie was getting ready to go to work. I listened to conversations he had with several other men as they prepared the mini-bus for the day's operation. My conclusion was that "There's a very soft mundane tone people use and I think a lot of context must come from key words and the situation." Without knowing the context, conversation can be unintelligible to outsiders. Later I was told that Jamaicans even make conversation unintelligible to other Jamaicans when they want to discuss something in private but can not get away from the crowd.

One of the most natural ways that I learned to use the language was in my classes. The children were asked to dictate stories to me and these came in the dialect. In a letter dated January 17, 1984 I noted,

> There is one word I mastered this week, `cow' pronounced `co'. It came up in my classes. In a story [I used experience stories at first.] one child said he had `one co'. I tried to understand but couldn't remember any such bird or animal. It was finally translated to me. So I laughed and later on used it with students to show how I speak differently from them. Some children told me they wanted to speak just like me and I told them I wanted to speak just like them. It broke the ice a little.

One final way I tried to learn the dialect was to study language tapes from the Linguistic Department at the University of the West Indies in Kingston. Although these tapes were more structured than my own study, I found that by the time I got them in November 1984 my own knowledge of the dialect was sufficient that I did not find them very useful.

Food Differences

One would expect that living in a significantly different climate would require eating different foods. I hardly expected the variety of foods or the problems that I encountered with them.

At first I was very excited by the new menus, "Ms. Peggy made me dinner tonight: fish, chicken back, rice and yam. It was delicious." However, early on I became concerned that I was losing weight. "Peggy is very good to me, she agreed to cook for me until I can learn what to buy and how to cook it....I can't eat much here and I know I'm losing weight." During the first months with Peggy I had very bad reactions to the food, especially the varieties of yams.

Throughout the early months of my stay in Jamaica there were also food shortages. (The staple foods I could manage to eat were often not available.) As early as January 1984 I noted the shortages, "Yesterday in the supermarkets of Montego Bay people were lined up to get rice and flour." Later, in February, as I planned to go to Kingston "I am planning on shopping for some food stuffs we cannot get in Hanover..I plan on buying rice and bread..I haven't seen bread in weeks and there is a shortage of flour and rice." In March 1984 "No chicken in the market anywhere! Fish is hard to find and beef is expensive." Again in March, "There's no fish, no meat, no chicken. What are people to eat?" I discovered that the local people had much less problem with these shortages. They ate foods that my stomach just wouldn't allow. [Yam, green banana, dumpling,] In July, I noted:

> There is no rice since I came. [I had returned from a visit to the U.S. on July 1.] No flour since last week, no bread... I even went for oatmeal and that is out too. But, there are plenty of green bananas. They can be boiled and eaten to take the place.

Later, when I moved to Montego Bay to live, the problem became less severe because I could get a greater variety of food.

Power and Water Problems

There were other changes in lifestyle that accompanied life in Jamaica. Frequent power and water outages made adaptation a challenge. My second night in Montego Bay after having dinner in town, "On the way up the hill the lights went out. I was completely blinded at first, but then I got so I could see the road." In May 1984, "For some residents water cut offs are daily." And, in July and August 1985 while I was staying in Kingston there was a severe draught. These quotes from my diary reflect the effect of this.

> Last night I stayed with Dorothy Whyte..she has no water whatsoever at all at her place. In fact, she hasn't had water for almost five weeks....Here at the Browns [where I was housesitting] there is water only from five to nine in the morning and again at night from five to nine. Good showers can only be taken before six.

I learned to save water for washing clothes, doing dishes, cooking and drinking. During the heat of the day I would go to the local country club for a swim (interestingly enough they had water). It made adapting as a professional more difficult for me because I was unable to manage personal cleanliness and keep up my appearance in a manner I was accustomed to. I had difficulty adapting to these problems which the shortages caused because suddenly everyday events took more time and thought on my part.

Political Mood

These changes in lifestyle were also affected by the political mood of the country. Rising costs of food and other essentials were causing a great deal of dissatisfaction, particularly among working class people because they couldn't keep up with the cost of living increases. Shortages also increased the fervor of their frustration. Strikes and protests were common during my stay. They limited daily comforts as well as my access to schools and interviewees. On December 31, 1983 this entry expresses the type of delay and frustration that these strikes produced in my work.

> There was an increase in gas last night from $6.00 to $9.00 per gallon. So the mini-bus operators were charging $4.00 instead of $3.00. There was a lot of angry discussion before we left heightened by a driver that wanted his money first. [Usually money is collected when the destination is reached. This request for pre-payment was a great insult to the passengers.] But finally we left and the van was very crowded. A few people refused to pay but it appeared that the mini-bus operators were winning.

When gas went up the second time from $9.00 to $11.00 the result was more devastating. Once again I was on my way to Lucea from Montego Bay.

> I got a ride into town this morning...At Montego Clinic we found out that the roads were blocked everywhere to Ocho Rios and to Lucea. Our road was blocked at Cornwall College. Everywhere we turned the road was blocked with rocks and burning tires. They [the driver and other passengers] wanted to get gas but couldn't get to the gas station. We went down Market Street but the road on the waterfront was burning. Cars went up onto the grass to go around the fires. Our driver started but one big policeman stopped us to wait for the fire truck to put out the fire. As the truck pulled up we disobeyed the police and went on. I put my hands over my face to avoid acknowledging the police now all around us with submachine guns. There was no law and no order. We went on through. We circled and came back through City Center. As we came down to Sam Sharpe Square a fire truck backed out of the market street by the bridge. Hoses were trailing but the truck went on amidst jeers from the crowd that followed throwing rocks at the driver and firemen. The fire blazed on in the street. I begged the driver to wait and let the crowd calm down before proceeding. We went down through the square and made a left into an alley. All other parts were blocked. Suddenly a turn brought us in front of an open gas station. We got gas while I watched youths roll tires out and down the road for more fires. The mob was running everywhere. Someone said the police were coming and the crowd broke running in every direction. We turned, to my relief and went up the hill around and about the back way to Dunbar. [Home]...The feeling is like a snow day. Everything is closed or closing. The radio informs us that the protest is island-wide. Children are lost or found. People have been shot in Kingston even on Hope Road. Portsmouth, part of Kingston, is completely isolated. Flights on Eastern Air lines have been cancelled. Sam Sharpe Square [The central square in the downtown business area of Montego Bay.] is closed. Mr.Buckley told me there is a bus right across the road at Cornwall College...Mr. Seaga came on the radio a short while back with a message that the police have everything under control, but that certainly is not what I saw this morning...Shop places are asking workers to stay home. The radio, earlier asked people to put their cars up safely and stay home.

Although the excitement of this experience was exhilarating at the time, later it left me frightened and concerned that if I were not aware of local events I might find myself in a similar situation that would not end well.

In May and June 1985 strikes once again took over the country. First there was a month-long postal workers strike, then another gas strike, Jr. doctors [interns] strike and finally a general strike to shut down all business on the island. June 24 (Diary)

> No sooner did the Jr. Doctors get back than the people have called for a general strike. Six unions called for a general strike today; teachers are joining tomorrow and Wednesday...Talibah just came from Mandeville and says that people are panic buying; lines have formed for gasoline; D. & G. [The soft drink factory] is closed. There is no water in Montego Bay because workers are striking and pipes have burst. They're threatening to close down the whole island.

Mandeville: June 26, 1985 (Diary) "The strike is continuing, no school, power cuts, no work island-wide."

My work at Patience during the pilot study was significantly interrupted during this time. I extended my stay by a week and a half to try to make up for lost time and distractions.

Sustained Impressions

Living With Fear

Perhaps one of the most significant changes to my life was learning to live with fear. Several weeks before I arrived at Ms. Peggy's in Forest Hills there had been a robbery. Two gunmen had come to the house just after sunset and taken the revenues from the mini-bus for that day. It was so frightening to Peggy that she was afraid to go to the police station and identify the gunmen for fear that there would be retaliation. As early as January 11, 1984 I noticed her fear, "The doors to the house are always locked at sunset." Later I realized that it was to keep out the gunman. In all of the houses I lived, except Esher in Lucea, this fear of the gunman prevailed and doors were routinely locked at sunset. The difference in Esher I feel was that the community was very close and there were three policeman on my short street. I was never robbed at home but the influence of the natives was strong enough that I adopted the same behavior wherever I went.

Other experiences added to the development of a general fear of being robbed.

On July 31, 1984 I was leaving Kingston to return to the country.

> ....I got directions to the Agricultural Building so I could buy seeds for Peggy. It was just off Parade. [The central square in the downtown business district of Kingston.] The bus circled Parade before dropping me off. As we went around I noticed police breaking stalls and putting the wooden splinters into pick-up trucks. I didn't pay it any mind.
>
> At the Agricultural building I got the seeds and chatted with the cashier. A man came in and she pointed `Your money's hanging out'. True enough someone had tried to pick his pocket and bills were hanging out of his pocket. I laughed to myself this couldn't happen to me.
>
> I started out down the street but got lost. Finally, an Indian-looking man accompanied me to Orange Street. As I came to the grocery store a woman commented `Your money is hanging out of your pocket.' I stared in disbelief. I checked. None was missing. Someone had been very clever. I never felt it.
>
> Next I had to circle Parade on the east side and walk up through the open market to get to my mini-bus home. I heard a commotion to my right and saw people

> running towards me...someone said something about `tear gas' and as I looked back over my right shoulder I could see a puff of grey smoke in the road. I kept on walking...
>
> After a block I began to notice the wares of the market stalls: acki, oranges, callaloo, coconut, mango, cloth, pots, pans. etc., I began walking in the streets darting in and out of shoppers, sellers and traffic. I all but stopped to buy an orange but thought better of it. At the Shell station Lodge (my mini-bus driver) was working on a tire on the bus. It was 10:30 and he was not due to leave until 12:00. I tucked my bag into the bus and went back for the orange.
>
> On the way back to the bus I had this encounter. I looked at him first at the waist. I noticed his brown shirt and then suddenly he reached up and pulled the gold chain from my neck...I turned on his tail yelling `Thief, thief! Stop that man! Him thief mi necklace!' Around the big bus he went in a big circle. [I followed him.] No one tried to stop him. Down Queen St., he ran to the next right, into an alley. I stopped at the corner to the alley and was completely surrounded by a crowd of women shopkeepers,`Didn't I know better than to wear gold in the market?...What was I doing there in the first place?...He should be killed!'...Finally, one nicely dressed woman touched me on the shoulder, `We tried to reach you but you couldn't hear. One woman up so has your necklace. He dropped it.' I was later told that he was known by the woman. The impression I got was that he was embarrassed by my unexpected explosion of `Thief, thief!' and upon seeing someone he knew he dropped it..."[Later, I learned that thieves were frequently stoned for doing such things.] One large woman in a green and white dress took me by the hand to get the necklace. Then she scolded me and patted my hand as she walked me through the market. When the Shell sign came in view she let go. But right away I ran into the big bus. The driver said... that I shouldn't be there. I responded with `I'm not a tourist. I live here.' He finally seemed satisfied and went on...When I got to Lodge's bus I got on and didn't move until it was ready to leave."

The threat of gunmen and thieves followed me wherever I went. In the quiet of my own neighborhood in Montego Bay one of my friends was robbed three times in two weeks as he walked to my house. One of my most relaxing activities had been to jog through the neighborhood but I stopped out of fear.

Fear also affected the selection of the schools I chose to do my study. Certain areas I would not travel to alone. I avoided inner city Kingston, and some country communities where I experienced hostility probably due to my being a single woman and a foreigner in an environment where that meant my motive for being there was for drugs or sex.

There was another type of fear that led me to purchase first a motorcycle and later a car. I feared for my life every time I took a mini-bus. Often I became physically ill on these trips. Here is one incident going from Lucea to Negril (Diary July 29, 1984),

> Riding to Negril in the mini-bus. The old...seats are falling apart...I take my seat and we roll on. On the curves to Forest Hills we begin to overtake Second.[Another driver] The bus pulls up at breakneck speed and stays 2 feet behind Second's bus around curve after curve. I fear he will try to pass. I fear he will not pass and remain so close. `Why does he drive so crazy?' I ask. The lady next to me says she doesn't like it either.

With the motorcycle my fears changed. I was no longer afraid of being completely in the power of what I considered an irresponsible driver. [There were some very good drivers but I didn't like taking my chances.] Instead I had to learn the ways of the road and to manage the fast moving vehicles. August 13, 1984 (letter)

> I decided to brave my way over the hills to Savanna la Mar. The road between Forest Hills and Glascow

> [About 10 miles] was pitted and rough. A fair number of mini-busses passed me; huge lorries with workers shouting anything from friendly greetings to obscenities and there were few cars. The main concern however, was not the vehicles but the people I passed. Children cause me the greatest concern. They run out at me from road banks, hailing me to stop, calling me names, clapping their hands, sometimes coming right out as if to grab the bike.

On another occasion I rode between two children threatening me with machetes. I just held my breath and rode through, the blades just missing me on either side. These situations described here happened in rural areas where drugs were prevalent. Tourists commonly entered these areas for drugs or accompanied Jamaicans for sex. As a result the local people probably have little respect for foreigners. In addition to my being a foreigner I was a single woman and riding a motorcycle. There may have been some jealousy on the part of women for my ability to have such freedom and on the part of men for my possession of a motorcycle which was a status symbol in rural Jamaica. I never knew a young Jamaican woman who owned a motorcycle, but the young men strived to be able to own one.

Adjusting to Solitude

Partly as a result of this adjustment to fear in my life I became very lonely. The types of activities that relieved pressure for me in my work situations in the U.S. were not available to me. I could not go out walking or jogging alone. I could not go out alone at night. And, I did not enjoy traveling the distances to visit with friends. I likened my home to a prison where the doors shut at sunset and opened at day light. Since I lived alone and without a telephone most of the time I was in Jamaica without a telephone I was forced to accept an aloneness I had never before experienced.

The types of experiences I had were not unfamiliar to Jamaicans but because I came from a situation where these fears were not prevalent I was particularly affected by it. Sometimes I was afraid of the fear itself. I wouldn't go out alone at night and I wouldn't ride certain mini-busses. I also didn't have the resources to overcome it because I was alone so much of the time. I didn't have social support for releasing my anxiety.

February 22, 1984 my diary reported, "For the foreigner abroad there are long moments of loneliness, never really fitting into the social structure." Again, "Tonight I walked in loneliness...The road was dotted with people. `Whitey, you going to see Bustamente?' (There was a celebration in honor of the first Prime Minister of Jamaica.) The youth crossed the street and spoke directly to me."

There were times when the greeting "Whitey" or "white girl" did not annoy me, but most of the time the tone of the greeting was one of disrespect or hostility. At these times I ignored the greetings or, as in the case above, I challenged them. At these times my feelings of isolation generally increased as the separateness of my life was emphasized.

In August 1984 I wrote, "Loneliness still the overwhelming problem for me here."

And in October 1984 I came to this conclusion,

> I realize now that much of my unhappiness and loneliness is due to my attempt to blend into the Jamaican community where I am not altogether welcomed. I am truly an outsider and I have to learn to accept the distance whether I like it or not.

Perceptions of Affluence

I was isolated not only because of the differences of my culture and the way I looked, but also because I was one of the more affluent class wherever I went. The very fact that I was in Jamaica set me in a class separate from the average working person who did not have access to travel. There were both advantages and disadvantages to this distinction. In a letter March 25, 1984 I noted,

> Out here in the country I don't feel racism...the differentiation here is economic. If you have money it doesn't matter what color your skin is. It is money that determines access to resources and advances. However, my whiteness makes me an obvious target for beggars, taunts and sometimes being ripped off. The mini-bus operators and market people are the worst. Mini-bus people will purposely short me 10 cents and market people jack up the prices when they see me.
>
> Yesterday, market day, I was hit on 3 times. `Beg you 50 cents for a pound of flour' said one man.
>
> `Have you no money?' I asked.
>
> He replied that he had money. I refused him.
>
> A little boy begged me for a `box drink.' He saw one in my hand. I asked him if he was hungry and he said `yes'. So I gave him 70 cents and told him to buy some biscuits. His name was Carl.
>
> A woman came aside and said `Beg you 50 cents.'
>
> `What for?' I asked.
>
> `Beg you 50 cents' she repeated. She needed it

> for kerosene oil. She had $1.50 but wanted $2.00 of oil. I refused her, but a friend of mine came along and gave her $1.00. Some people won't go to the market because they can't face the beggars.

Some people were more crafty in their appeals for money. In Kingston I wrote,

> The day before I was taking pictures going up Knutsford Blvd. There was a string of cows stopping traffic. I caught them in my camera.
>
> Hear one woman now as she grabbed my arm, `When a white person tek mi picture, they must gi mi some monie.'
>
> (I replied) `Tek you hand off me, now. Mi na tek your picture. Mi tek picture of de street. Tek you hand off me now!
>
> Later she apologized and I told her she mustn't do that. She claimed she wasn't holding me back.

My diary of April 2, 1985 tells of the experience of trying to rent a room for the Baha'is of Montego Bay. I went with a Jamaican friend, Derek.

> Yesterday Derek and I saw some real estate for a possible center. It seemed really nice but we were told by the manager that rent was $750 - $800 and it had a deposit.
>
> Later I took Arash [A Persian friend] to see it. We visited the agent and were told Grace [a Jamaican woman] had seen the place and been told it was available for $600... It seems rents are higher for white people than for Blacks.

And, the myth about America being a land of ease and plenty brought me constant appeals for companionship and even love from men. August 18, 1985 in my diary,

> Coming across the field yesterday afternoon I scolded.. a man when he asked me if I didn't need company. `Look 'pon me, You tink I is someone who can't find company if she wants.' I said.
>
> Later I told him `is not a question of me like or dislike you. Is a question of me tired of whitey, whitey, white girl you want some company. You can walk along and nobody troubles you. I'd like to walk along by myself in peace too!'

Natural Immersion in the Jamaican Culture

The difficulty of immersion into the culture meant my research task would be complicated. I often questioned whether to go ahead. It meant that I would have to step outside my own consciousness to get beyond those feelings of fear and frustration that held me back. It meant that at times my personal goals would have to take precedence over those feelings that would inhibit progress, but ultimately, it meant striking a balance that would allow me to perform efficiently.

Some of the situations that I wrote about were for the pure pleasure of experiencing another culture, another way. I used to enjoy the sounds, children running in the streets, birds in the trees and the everyday sounds of running a household. In Montego Bay I wrote about the sounds and sights:

> I am writing from the back porch. The nightingale is serenading me from the telephone pole. The large cruise ship has just left port. The pitcarrie (is) chasing the joncrow through the sky; lush green forests of palms and bananas. Blue skies and white fluffy clouds.

These scenes helped to keep me going when times got rough.

Lucea earlier offered me a different view. These quotes from a letter dated August 21, 1984 share this impression.

> I can hear Mabel 'squija, squija' as she washes my clothes... Mabel is here and listening to her soap on

the radio. `The Way of the World'. It doesn't vary much from the American T.V. versions. Everyone is always meddling in everyone else's affairs.

Making a simple connection made me feel less distant.

One of my favorite outings was taking the train. From my diary entry June 11, 1985 I recall this:

> While I waited I talked to the mango lady. `Yes, times are tough.' She just comes to sell a few mangoes to make a little money....Many people take up benches with their luggage while they stand. I prefer to sit. As soon as there is a seat I sit down next to the mango lady. She thinks it must be a nice life to travel out from one place... Later]Two young girls face me on the train with their baby girl. They fuss and primp her along the way. Finally, they dress her up in a pretty little girl's dress that is considerably too big with stains on one side. They tie up her hair in ribbons and leave on the knit bottoms, pink like a bunting...They laugh when the skinny little man comes along selling `sherimp' (shrimp) in a voice that sounds like his nostrils have been cut off by clothespins. He is dirty, smelling and sweaty. I would not buy anything unpacked from him, but I carefully observe a young man in the next set of seats [who bought some shrimp] to see if he survives. It rains very hard. We have to close the windows of the train and it makes it stuffy.
>
> A mother and her little boy come on. His face tied in a towel. At first I think he must have a toothache. But then I hear the mother say he has mumps. What is he doing on the train with mumps?
>
> Up and down. Down and up. Back and forth. `Ice cream; cream; creamy; vanilla cream.'; `Nuts, nuts, popcorn, nuts.'; `Bahmy, bahmy [A bread made from casava] and fish'; `Cold drinks, get you ice cold drinks.' Men, women, youth. Ragged or tidy; each one trying to `mek a monie' (make money).
>
> The conductor comes along `Tickets, let me see your tickets'.
>
> A fat lady staggers with the motion of the train, side to side, holding fast to each seat as she progresses. A sudden lurch sends her into the arms of a strange man. We all watch. We all laugh. She recomposes herself without looking back and goes on. We watch her return for another sudden lurch to send her off her feet and give us all some more entertainment.

> At each stop little ragged barefoot boys run through the train looking for stray bottles. Jumping on as the train rolls into the station and off at the very last minute as it rolls out again.
>
> We pass through country with houses that seem to be far removed from roads and modern transportation. I wonder how people manage.
>
> The banana leaves shine in the rain. It is raining hard when we reach Mo Bay. Even my umbrella cannot protect me from the deluge and rivers in the street.

At times like this I felt that I blended right in. I experienced what the others did.

Often disaster led to finding and enjoying parts of Jamaica obscured by their inaccessibility. My diary, June 17, 1985, tells this story:

> Trip back from Mo Bay last week took me through God's country. [Newton, a Baha'i friend] navigated us onto some very unworn path right into the bush and as if pre-determined the car broke down. We pushed it about 1/4 mile but it was no use we couldn't get it to a mechanic. Newton finally went off to look for help. I stayed with the car and watched a farmer up on the hill wind his way down to me. When he got there we sat on the railing of a bridge overlooking an overgrown stream and talked. Finally at his suggestion I asked him to go for a mechanic. He went off in the opposite direction. [from Newton]
>
> I was alone now, completely except for the Quaqua bird, crickets and voices in the distance. I paced back and forth, watched the river and kept myself occupied until Newton returned. He, with a jr. mechanic and almost no tools figured out what was wrong but couldn't fix it. As dark was setting in a big lorry roared down on us. When I stopped it to warn it of the car across the road my farmer yelled down to me. This was the mechanic. It was dark now but the truck had an extension light and the driver had tools. Five or six youth bounced around looking here and there as the mechanic went to work. The points were closed. Once separated we were on our way with only the startex giving a problem. We'd stall out because I wasn't shifting properly and once Michael had to jolt the startex to get us going. I lost patience and said `I can't stand it anymore'. But we got going and drove and drove and drove, round and into pot holes, over

> rough roads, past dimly lit bars and dark groups on the roadsides. Once we passed some young men with pineapples. Newton asked for one and got four. They had fallen from the truck before us. We were in pineapple heaven. 6 1/2 hours after starting out we arrived. [It should be no more than a four hour trip.]

Even though, we arrived tired there was a satisfaction in knowing that the country people who helped us along our way cared.

There were planned adventures too that helped me to feel apart of the Jamaican life.

Often in the country I heard the sound of drums and singing into the night. One night I persuaded a friend to follow the sound. In my diary, June 18, 1985 I wrote,

> We were drawn to the Revivalist Church on the hill. The singing and drumming seemed to draw us neared and nearer.
>
> One interruption was a pinch and tug.
>
> `Why, you pull mi hair?' I said. `Why can't I just pass by wid out you troubling me?'
>
> The youth moved quickly to the end of his friends and hid partly behind the last girl.
>
> `You is foolish, man.'
>
> `Sorry, white girl.' and some giggles followed.
>
> On our way down darkened streets, past dimly lit houses and shops; children pausing to stare at the white figure passing in the dark, sometimes made me feel as if I wear a kind of florescent glow on my skin that everyone can tell I'm passing. Up the rocky but well-packed road through the outskirts of Royal Flats to the kerosene lit church on the left. Children pressed their faces to the slits in the bamboo walls to see inside. Around to one side a group gathered at the doorway and here David pulled me over to see inside. People were dancing around a box with a candle, wash basin and a pot of flowers [looking like herbal branches] In and out, round and round mesmerizing the crowd.
>
> I heard a little voice to my right, `Evening, teacher' and knew it was one of the children from Montgomery primary where I had substituted."
>
> A large woman began to move up and down singing

and shaking to the chants of the singers inside. People moved in and out the door.

On benches inside sat men and women spectators and children sleeping. In front to the left on a chalk board was written a PSALM...

The preacher wore a black suit with a priest's collar. A lady in black with a red sash seemed to take over and lead the group.

Girls in snug skirts and light colored blouses danced next to young men dressed in vests and suit pants.

An elderly lady dressed in a fancy, lacy white or beige dress danced round and round the hut greeting other dancers, sometimes taking them for a swing. Men danced with men, women with women and sometimes paired off together for a few steps. One girl wearing a white blouse and black skirt swooned. No one stopped dancing. Her friends carried her to one side where she sat on a box still swinging and swaying with the music.

The lady (in the black dress with red sash) preached that we must be careful to keep ourselves in order lest the angel come to carry us away. She stressed that she kept herself in order and was ready to go at any time. She mentioned ... (a) little boy that drowned saying that he put his foot in the wrong place and went to the angel.

The dancers stopped and rinsed their hands in the water. Then the dancing continued to higher and higher intensity. One arm in, then the other. Arum, ba, ba, arum, ba, ba,. Each accentuated with a stomp of the foot. I wondered if that was the drumming sound I so often can hear from the house, until a drummer appeared in one corner. Beating a home-made drum with a stick. A lady shook a tambourine. Someone whispered, `Someone surely will go down tonight.'

Little boys jumped up and down behind a long table covered by a dark green cloth marked with a cross. The pulpit stood to the left of it, also marked with a cross. The preacher man stood behind the pulpit seeming to try to take over control `Amen, Amen Amen'. When the crowd didn't respond to his calls he dropped down to the floor and began singing again.

As we pulled ourselves away we could see children still peering and hear the beat of drums and feet. The voices rising and falling in rhythmic tones carried us all the way home and then into our sleep.

Weather also became a common binding experience.

Coming from a climate where life goes on in spite of the weather I was constantly amazed at the torrential rains and the effects if had on life.

> The worst of the weather here is the torrential downpours we get almost daily. There is plenty of warning though. The sky clouds up and clouds move in slowly. Anyone with half a set of wits can get to safety before the rain falls.
>
> People walk along the streets wearing plastic bags on their heads and (plastic) sheets to cover their bodies.
>
> It is raining now. It came so fast. I could hear it in the distance sounding like the wind, a few drops and suddenly a torrential downpour....Tonight..,in the rain, I watched school children pack themselves into the big bus. It never seems that they will all fit. But I've never seen the driver cut off the children...Another mini-bus packed teachers and students in 'til its sides were bulging.

These were the shared experiences. When I got wet so did everyone else. No one looked at me differently then. By experiencing situations where I was equally able to share in the joys of Jamaican beauty, and the natural types of hardships that everyone faced, a balance could be brought into my life.

Some adaptation and repression of my fears would be necessary in order to proceed with the research, but there were also events that allowed a natural immersion to take place. Partial immersion would be possible and the research could advance.

Entry Into School Life

There were two opportunities for me to become involved in the Jamaican school system before beginning this study. The first occurred from January 1984 - May 1984 when I did voluntary tutoring for students with difficulties in reading at the Forest Hills Secondary School. The second opportunity occurred from September 1984 - December 1984 at the same school. For this second experience I took the role of temporary chairperson of the reading program and taught seventh and tenth grade `remedial' classes.

Description of Forest Hills Secondary

Forest Hills Secondary is a school located in a rural town on the seacoast of Jamaica. It is a half hour from the nearest reliable telephone, but has electricity in many homes and in the school. The town itself has only a few shops, a grocery store, several roadside bars but no restaurants. There is, however, a primary school in the center of town as well as a public library. The population of the town is several hundred families.

Forest Hills Secondary School is located on the outskirts of town on the main road. It is a co-educational vocational/technical school that has a variety of shop facilities (wood, metal, electrical, cooking, sewing, automotive, etc.) and an agricultural component. The academic classrooms are located in a square in the middle of the vocational facilities. On one side of the school buildings is a large field used for sports. (Soccer, cricket, and other team sports are played here.) At the front of the school is a paved area used for parking, net ball and volleyball. On the perimeter of the buildings and around the school are crotons and other plants commonly called 'flowers'. The school is fenced in with a eight foot high wire mesh fence.

When you arrive at the school the first thing that catches your eye is a group of higglers (street vendors) under the shelter of a bus stop. They sell fruit, sweeties and other treats to students as they come and go, and during breaks and lunch. Ice cream vendors on motorcycles join them during the class breaks and lunch.

As you enter the school grounds through the main gate and cross the parking lot you are impressed with the lovely vegetation that encompasses the grounds. The reds, yellows and greens of the crotons make an inviting picture of the tropical beauty of Jamaica. You enter the school buildings through an open space in the long building facing front. As you pass through the building you come to a large grassy area where devotions are held once a week and other official events occur on special occasions. This grassy square is in the center of the school buildings. To the left is the principal's office, teacher's room and secretaries office. To the right is the library. It is in the rest of the buildings that the academic classes are held. They are two story cement facilities with full cement walls to partition classroom and office space. (Individual classrooms in these buildings will be described on pages 45-46.)

The Students

Students at Forest Hills Secondary attended classes in grades 7 - 11. These students came from a variety of primary schools, at least five different rural towns. They were students who had not passed the Common Entrance Examination and been accepted into regular high schools. They would not receive a high school diploma when they left.

Students were primarily from low to moderate income families and represented a variety of ethnic groups including: African, Indian and Chinese. Most of the children were of an African ethnic heritage.

Nature of My Work: January 1984 - May 1984

My assignment was to work with groups of three to four children from grades seven, eight, nine and ten. These children were having extreme difficulties in their regular 'remedial' English classes. I was to work with them specifically on their reading.

My teaching space was not in the main building and it was quite rustic. January 20, 1984 in a letter I reported, "I am teaching behind the director's house on his patio. You can hear the birds, the housekeeper, and the absolute quiet of Jamaica." The lack of materials was quite evident even on the first day I went. The letter dated January 9, 1984 tells this, "There are so few materials to use. I did find a Scott Foresman series that Olive (Olive Niles, my aunt) helped write and there are odds and ends from other series from England and the U.S. I ended up using a piece of a blackboard that the principal found for me, pencils and paper. I brought in books that I took out of the library or had at home.

I learned about some of the frustrations teachers encounter in a system where children do not always come to school. "It is raining. In fact it has been storming now for a week...It's been raining so hard that no one can move around. School has been relatively dull. Children don't come when it's rainy because they don't have rain gear, can't wash their clothes and don't have warm clothes to fight off the dampness." letter dated January 3, 1984. And again in my diary February 17, 1984 I noted, "Yesterday and today only one student all day. I'm discouraged by the attendance or lack of it." While the rain kept some children away others were kept out by periods of illness or tiredness. Some of the teachers attributed it to laziness or an attempt to feign illness. In my diary entry of February 17, 1984 I accepted the popular view. "People in Jamaica always putting down their heads and saying they're sick...students trying to get out of work by pretending to be sick."

In fact, this complaint of illness may reflect diet or some deeper attitude in the society. Children would report to me that they came to school without eating and some would not have lunch. Whenever possible we would try to remedy this situation by providing free meals through the cafeteria. Another possible explanation that relates closely to the response attitude of the teachers may come from slavery experiences.

> Blacks, said the white slave owners, were born lazy, and only exerted themselves when driven to do so. When on the job, slaves did the absolute minimum of work: this was the main reason why slave owners insisted that they had to use the whip. (Mathurin, 1975, pg. 8)

But the slaves were not lazy as the white slave owners thought. Instead they were rebellious and found various creative ways to avoid working for their masters.

> It was ... customary, however, for slaves to adopt ... clever and subtle methods of avoiding work, and thereby undermining the operations of the plantation. They realized, for instance, that illness could be developed into a nearly fool proof technique for escaping the labour of the field, and they became accomplished actors and actresses in assuming the role of patient....It was virtually impossible for the slave owner to distinguish always the malingerer from the genuinely sick. He tended to think the worse, and to assume that the slave was lying and deceiving; often he was right. (Mathurin pg. 10-11)

This writing reflects a close approximation of what I heard teachers saying about students and it occurred to me that this issue of `illness', as well as feelings about `using the whip', could be a carry over from slavery time . In some of the schools I visited teachers felt that using the belt or cane was the only way to get some children to be productive.

There was a feeling of some success in spite of all the difficulties.

> I'm seeing sign of improvement with some students. Patrick seems to really listen to me now and I think he's moving ahead nicely. Devon is also better motivated...Yesterday Patrick was writing sentences as I dictated them. He wrote what he heard and did quite well. I try to get him to see how close to the real thing he is. (Diary, March 21, 1984)

And, this was encouraged by comments made from their classroom teachers."Teachers, Rosemary, Ms. Burnside have mentioned students trying whereas before they wouldn't attempt anything that looked like writing. "(March 21 diary) Earlier in a February 17 entry I remarked, "Ms. Burnside told me Paul was reading The Lucky Dip [One of the Lady Bird Readers, an English preprimer, (Murray, 1974)] yesterday quite independently." He had not attempted to read for her before.

Nature of My Work: September 1984 - December 1984

My second experience began in September 1984 and continued through the end of December. Once again I worked voluntarily at Forest Hills Secondary School. This time however, I was incorporated into the regular program as a classroom teacher. I was asked to replace Rosemary Bailey, a remedial teacher, in both her capacity as teacher and reading program chairperson.

Although I was now in the main classroom building my actual physical situation had improved only slightly. I was assigned two rooms; one for the tenth graders and a second one for the seventh graders. These were shared with other teachers on the first shift as well as other teachers on my shift.

My seventh grade situation was described in a letter, October 8, 1984.

> The school is like nothing you've ever worked in. The roof leaks in my classroom. The door won't close unless I put a chair in front. There is only one light bulb that works and often there are not enough chairs or desks to go around. Teachers are supposed to have a small desk and chair but I often give that up to students. What chairs there are, are often broken or crudely fixed. The desks are about 4 feet wide. Two children sit at a desk, three if things get tight.

Later on December 12 (letter) as I summarize the frustration of using written communication I remarked that the children had, "desks that were rough and stringy to write on;" and for myself, "a chalkboard that doesn't take the chalk;"

At the beginning of the term I enthusiastically decorated the seventh grade room's bulletin boards. I was told not to worry. They would never last. I discovered a cupboard with a scant supply of reading materials including the Lady Bird readers, a series of preprimer through grade one readers from England. I also found a number of science and history materials. They were written at a third or fourth grade level.

After meeting my grade seven students for the first time I realized that the materials available would not be appropriate. On September 3, 1984 (letter) I write about my seventh graders,

> Today was the first day of school for me. I met my seventh grade homeroom. I have 4 girls and 24 boys. It's quite a class. About a third of them don't know how to make letters. Half of them can't copy from the blackboard. None of them have organizational skills...
>
> Again on September 10 (letter)
>
> I have one 7th grader who's letters look like scribbles. Even when I gave him letters to copy he couldn't. Finally I gave him some to trace. Everyone else is ready to write.

In a letter dated October 24, 1984 I described the tenth grade facility.

> I have one class that shares a room [with metal divider] twice a week with movies. That's almost intolerable. But the kids don't seem to mind it as much as I do. I have to shout over the sound so I try to plan lessons where they are writing.

This room was in a large concrete hall. Often there were not enough chairs for my students and they had to sit on planks at the back of the room or on the floor. Since the room looked out onto the playground I would look up and see several faces pressed against the louvers. These children would disturb my students. I would tell my class how wonderful it was to have an audience and that maybe they would learn something while they watched. This usually got rid of the curious onlookers.

Once again I found myself without appropriate materials to use. "There are no textbooks to use. I literally do everything on the board or orally." (September

18, letter) As a result I built my program around the children's writing. Early on I began a structure of writing that included editing and rewriting.

When I met with my tenth graders I found that I had a class of twenty-eight students; eleven were girls and seventeen were boys. I asked them to write a story and most of them had difficulty with this. One boy even copied a story from a book to hand in. All of the students had difficulty with spelling and most of them couldn't write a complete paragraph. Several students had no sense of a sentence and punctuation was hit or miss.

Of the early experience with my tenth graders I wrote on September 18, 1984

> So far my tenth graders have written one story maximum length one page. [Some couldn't make it.] They have to proofread and correct. They then copy it over with corrections for a grade. I had at least one girl skip class. I had 3 A's and the rest are proofreading and copying.

When I could I read to the children. One of my first successes was to read Thank-you Ma'm by Langston Hughes to the tenth graders. I later read from a simplified version of Malcolm X. I was unable to find local literature from the Caribbean.

All of my activities were designed to increase motivation as well as academic skills. I put on a puppet show, conducted role playing and brought in puzzles. At the end of the semester I brought in the Doctor Bird Readers for my tenth graders and allowed them to select the stories they wanted to read by themselves or in pairs. The seventh graders I gave the Lady Bird Readers (Murray, 1974) but discovered that they were difficult to interpret because some of the stories were culturally irrelevant. The first story in the series, The Lucky Dip is about some children who go to a fair and take a chance to dip for a prize from a barrel. My children couldn't explain the story to me, because they simply didn't know what was happening. They had never been to a fair or seen a game like the lucky dip in the story. We used the few relevant stories that they could read.

One of the most difficult aspects of this experience revolved around my role as chairperson. From the beginning of the semester it was apparent that I would not be easily accepted in this role. For some reason I could not determine, the rest of the staff, who had been friendly with me the previous semester, avoided me and rarely communicated to me. When I scheduled a meeting they came but one of the women made such a face that I actually questioned her about what was going on. I got no response. During the semester I was supposed to review lesson plans and mark them. When I questioned these plans I was told that this was the way they had always done it and they didn't understand my questions. The relationship got worse over the semester and I felt completely rejected but never understood why. When Rosemary returned the next term she queried the teachers and discovered that they thought I had been assigned a permanent place in the school. This would mean that one of the temporary teachers on pregnancy leave would probably not return. This was probably the cause of the resentment that led to my ostracism. I felt partly to blame for the situation because I had never publicized the fact that I was not hired by the Ministry but working as a volunteer. My reasoning had been that I didn't want to cause resentment over my ability to continue to work as a volunteer. As a result of this experience it became clear that my entry into schools would have to be carefully tempered to let staff know exactly how I got there and what my purpose was.

Throughout the semester my experiences with the children provided an evaluation of their general knowledge of the world. I discovered that they knew little of the `foreign' world. To make myself understood I had to translate details into their own cultural experience. To understand their conversation I had to have significant knowledge of their language and the context of their words. From this experience I concluded that living and working within the community would be a vital part of my research were it to succeed. I also discovered that the children were not used to working independently and needed a great deal of direction. I decided that my interviews with children would have to be carefully directed with follow-up on questions planned. Open ended questions generally got little or no response in class. Often the students responded with a blank stare or misunderstanding.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have discussed the preparations that were completed prior to beginning the actual research project. These included developing a relationship with the Jamaican Ministry of Education, working in a public secondary school, and living in a rural Jamaican community. I took advantage of the first year and a half to learn about the culture and to develop an ability to communicate in the local dialect. I used a quantitative questionnaire to gather information about the use of the books and immediate problems in distribution. In addition, this questionnaire served to show that principals and teachers in many schools considered that the books were relevant to the children's experiences. It became apparent that my task was to evaluate how this relevancy was achieved in the body of my research, not to determine whether the books were considered relevant as I had first questioned.

In the Spring of 1985 I visited 24 schools to select three sites for the study. After completing these site visits, I decided to test out my research questions and strategies in a pilot study and a fourth school was selected. These schools were selected because they were convenient, they had a mixed socio-economic population, and

I felt I would be comfortable working with the principals and staff.

Through my experiences at Forest Hills Secondary I concluded that my introduction to the school and staff was critical to the outcome of my experience there. Letters of introduction were sent to each school before I arrived and I carried a letter from the Ministry telling my purpose for being there.

The last section of this chapter is a narrative account of my experiences as I developed an understanding of the culture and an ability to communicate with the local people. This section contains quotes as well as summaries of field notes I kept and letters I wrote home.

The purpose of sharing events and details from these records was to provide the reader with a profile of the experiences that helped prepare me for the actual study. It also provides an insight into how these experiences affected the progress and results of the research, and how I, personally, had an effect on the research.

The format of this report included events that influenced adjustment to the Jamaican culture and climate, scenes that created an impression of the Jamaican way of life and details of the particular circumstances I faced in my entry into the Jamaican schools. This introduction to Jamaican life, language and culture was a vital component of the research design. My intention was to complete a qualitative study which would require my immersion in local life. I learned that the longer I stayed the more difficult it was for me to adapt my basic needs to the local culture. In effect, immersion was easiest when I first arrived in Jamaica and everything was new and exciting. Over time my personal needs took on greater and greater importance in my life.

The conclusions I reached during this preface to the study had a great influence on the execution of my intended research. The focus of my research changed to looking at `how' rather than `if' the <u>Dr. Bird Readers</u> were culturally relevant. I decided to include a pilot study to test out my methodology and questioning strategies. I learned that it was important for me to consider my personal needs as a foreigner, as well as, being concerned over immersion into the culture. As a result, I moved into Montego Bay and, finally, Kingston where I could be closer to a North American experience.

The next chapter will describe the pilot study, and Chapters Six and Seven provide an analysis of the interviews I conducted in the study itself.

Footnotes

* School names are replaced with pseudonyms.

CHAPTER 5

PILOT STUDY

This chapter provides a discussion of the pilot study experience. The first section includes a description of the school, demographic information about the children, and the nature of my work. The second section includes a report of the student profiles, and student and teacher interviews. The third section reports my findings, draws conclusions based on these findings and reports the influence of the pilot study on the actual research project.

Methodology

The methodology for the pilot study followed the previously described methodology of this dissertation (See Chapter Two). Entry into the school community was made through observation and informal interviews with students and teachers. Once a relationship was established interview sessions were arranged for groups of students and the teachers. Interviews included both close-ended and open-ended questions. The analysis is descriptive in nature.

Purpose of This Study

The purpose of the pilot study was to provide experience with using qualitative design and to provide an opportunity to familiarize myself with doing research in the Jamaican school environment. The main focus of the pilot study was to examine four aspects of the research that would affect my work in Spring 1988:

1. My ability as a researcher to communicate with Jamaican children and teachers.
2. The design of my questions.
3. The amount and type of information given by the children.
4. The amount and type of information given by the teachers.

Introduction to Patience School

Patience school was selected for the pilot study and not used in the main study because of the availability of accommodations at the time I needed to conduct the study. It was selected as one of the schools in general because of the type of atmosphere created by the teachers and principal that I experienced when I visited there. It was also selected because it represents a small rural school, isolated from the mainstream where teachers work independently with little input from the Ministry. This type of situation represents many schools in rural Jamaica and I wanted to have some input about the books from these students as well as students from larger or more urban schools.

Description of the School Setting

Patience is located in the central southwest of Jamaica in the parish of Manchester. The nearest commercial district is about six miles away in Mandeville. The regional Ministry of Education Office as well as a variety of businesses and services are located in Mandeville. It is the largest commercial district in the southwest of Jamaica. However, residents must still rely on trips to Kingston for official business and availability of some goods and services. This is a two hour trip by mini-bus or a one and half hour trip by car. The train goes daily and takes about three hours.

Patience is a small town set on top of a mountain. It is nestled in a mountain range about 40 miles inland. The area is cooler than the general climate for the rest of Jamaica and it receives a good amount of rainfall. However, there is a problem with water at the school because it is situated on top of the mountain and relies on the rain water caught in tanks. There are two tanks at the school, but I was told that they are insufficient to meet the needs of the school. Water is occasionally brought in trucks by the parish council. Other facilities at the school are quite sufficient and there is electricity.

The school grounds always appear neat and cheerful. Children take turns caring for the grounds and there is a sense of pride among students for their school. Inside the enclosed compound is a garden of flowers. The classrooms are situated around this garden.

I walked up a steep but well graded gravel road to reach the school from the center of Patience. To one side, a ruddy dirt path is used by the children as a short cut. The other side, on the left, is lined with green shrubs and bushes as it drops down behind the town below. The school is surrounded by lush green fields of grass. A large guango tree stands out above the school and slightly to its left. Here children in uniforms, (boys in brown shirts and slacks, and girls in blue and white dresses) play or sit on the exposed roots. Here, too, is where I gathered with children during breaks for informal singing and story telling.

The school building is a yellowish color made ruddy over the years by bauxite, the red earth, packed down in front. The principal's car stands parked under a small tree just to the left of the yard at the entrance to the school. Children play games in the yard before school and during breaks. One of the favorite games played by the girls uses a plastic bag stuffed with trash into a soft ball. The game is called baseball. One girl tries to hit another girl as she runs in an area using the school wall as one boundary and the imaginary line that the second girl runs back and forth on as the other boundary. Sometimes the wind blows red earth into the air and chases the girls in blue uniforms as they run back and forth.

A small doorway opens into a courtyard of crotons and other colorful plants commonly referred to as the flowers. A narrow cement path surrounds the square of flowers and on one end sits a large rusty drum for collecting water for the plants. Before school children gather at the doorway and are called to order by their teachers. Then they form lines by grade and walk single-file into the courtyard. Once inside the courtyard they file off to their classrooms.

The third and fourth grade classrooms open onto the courtyard and therefore have plenty of natural lighting. The fifth and sixth grade rooms have natural lighting only from glass windows onto the courtyard and veranda. There are electric florescent lights in the ceiling. The result is that the third and fourth grade rooms tend to have more light.

Individual classes are divided by blackboard dividers. These can hardly serve to block out noise but they do manage to separate classes visually and provide teaching tools for the teachers.

Children sit at wooden desk-chair combination benches. Each set holds two to three children. There is a space provided under each desk top for books. Along the sides of classes are bookshelves and chalkboards. They are difficult to get to because of the tightly packed classroom. Teachers sit at the front of each class at cedar tables with matching chairs. At the back of the sixth grade classes is an upright piano. This is used in the mornings for devotions.

The rooms are small with 4 classes each. Each class has about 55 children registered. Because of this the desks are tightly fit together with little space for teachers or students to move in between. In fact, a typical seating arrangement allows access from the sides only with several desks side by side in rows. This makes it extremely difficult for teachers to supervise seat work.

Other facilities: Because there is little water children use outdoor toilets which are located on either side of the playing field behind the school. These are rustic wooden facilities of concrete and cement block foundations.

A canteen service is provided at the school in a central space between classrooms. This area is dimly lit by natural light or an extended light bulb. One wooden table acts as counter space from which sweeties, ice cream, biscuits and drinks are sold to those students who don't have lunch or wish to supplement what they have brought from home. Staff members take turns running the canteen under the direction of the principal, who works alongside. On one occasion I observed children practicing for a play on the opposite side of the canteen during lunch break.

On the roadway leading to the school higglers (local vendors) set up their stands and sell fruits, biscuits, homemade cakes, sweeties, and ice cream at lunch time.

Another area for children to play before school and during breaks is behind the school on a large playing field. There is a well worn piece of land in the middle that children use as a cricketer's strip. Off to one side the girls have found a thicket and cleaned it up to use for a doll haven. Other areas are used for soccer (football) and other running games.

Mountains can be seen in the distance surrounding the school on three sides. Vegetation on the fourth side hides the slope that descends into town. There is a panoramic view of the local countryside from just outside the school.

Demographic Information

Children in Patience school come from a variety of communities, about ten in all. Most of these are very small communities with populations of only several hundred people. No exact census information is available.

Most of the children come from homes where one parent is involved in washing or farming for a living. These are generally low-income households. The next largest group included middle-income parents who were shop-keepers, taxi-drivers, soldiers, carpenters, and police. Other occupations mentioned less frequently were teachers, firemen, mechanics, nurses, tailors and fishermen.

Other parents were involved in dressmaking, farming, taxi driving, working with handicapped, cleaning of professional workplaces, accounting, teaching, working in a bank, telephone operation, cashier in a supermarket, masonry, homemaking, and working at Alcan, a local bauxite factory. These households represent low and middle income families. I got no indication that there were children from upper income families in this school.

Through observation I have noted the following physical description of the students.

Most of the students were of slight build by American standards, but average by Jamaican standards. They are generally clean and healthy looking children. About 1/3 of the children come to school barefoot. Every day there are some children who come dressed in their regular clothes and not in uniform. From my past experience at Forest Hills I had learned that this means that clothes did not get washed, uniforms were damaged and awaiting repair or children did not have sufficient uniforms. Most of the children wore a closed black leather shoe, although some did wear running shoes or dress shoes.

There are no written records kept at the school to indicate the ethnic heritage of students. Determination of this was made by talking to the principal and teachers. The children in this school are all of African descent. There were no students whose physical appearance indicated Indian or Chinese heritage.

In addition, there were no children who were obviously Rastafarian.[1] No children came to school wearing the typical locks hair style. Boys wore a close hair cut and the girls wore a variety of neatly combed braided or curled hairstyles. These were often decorated with colorful ribbons and barrettes (clips).

Access and Rapport (Field Notes)

I began my study at Patience on a Tuesday, one day behind my proposed starting time. When I entered the school I met with the principal, Mr. Davis, in his office but I did not have a clear idea of what my proposed plan was.

I told Mr. Davis that my intentions were to become familiar with the school by participating in activities in any way that would assist him. The following program emerged from our joint consultation over the next three weeks.

1. I conducted my work at the school in three hours per day at the school. This allowed me to have adequate time to complete my field notes.

2. I visited all classes in K - 6 as a guest to allow all the children to get to know me.

3. I spent time in each grade four, five and six classroom assisting with reading groups in order to get to know specific children. I was able to spend a concerted

amount of time with each class, at least three times, once per week for three weeks.

4. I selected children by consulting with teachers. I asked them to help me find children who were reading at a variety of reading levels, who would cooperate with me and who came from families with varied income levels.

5. After three weeks I began meeting with groups of students to begin the interview process. (This process will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.)

6. I interviewed teachers briefly about their impressions of the cultural impact of the books on the last day of school.

My first day I was taken to one of the grade five teachers. She welcomed me and allowed me to sit in the back of her class to observe. Then she introduced me formally to the class and I gave a talk about myself. After my talk the children were invited to ask me questions and tell me about themselves. This information was quite useful as I was able to begin to get a picture of the demographic make-up of the school.

Finally, I was given a small reading group and sent outside to work with them. We were using the Dr. Bird Readers. This gave me a chance to try out some types of questions on the children.

In the next few days I would develop my lessons to include a variety of activities. These would test a variety of skills.

Story Comprehension:

A variety of activities including retelling of passages, having students question me about stories they had just read, and my questioning of them helped me to assess their comprehension of the stories.

I discovered that the students could easily retell passages, find proof in specific passages, answer literal questions, and recall the sequence of events. However, they had difficulty posing questions, answering analytical questions, interpretive questions, making predictions and describing characters.

Language Awareness:

Activities were used to determine the ability of students to use and understand the standard language of the stories. Students role played characters, read dialogues, and defined vocabulary.

Some of the students had experience with drama and were very good at role playing in the dialect. Other students imitated the text or were unable to remember the parts. Children demonstrated a lack of understanding of dialogue and tended to read the entire text. However, they had no difficulty with the definition of vocabulary terms and seemed to understand the difference between the text language and their own spoken language. They tended to place a negative value on their own language.

Awareness of Story Structure:

To determine the students' sense of story structure I listened to their oral stories, asked them to retell stories and by taking turns.

Both the oral stories and retellings were sequential and full of details. The oral stories tended to be more lively than the retellings which were often done in a tone of text repetition rather than story telling. Still, the students seem to have a good grasp of the nature of story structure.

Picture Interpretation:

There were two activities that were used to assess picture interpretation. Students were asked to discuss the quality of characters on the basis of a picture and to criticize the artistic quality of the illustrations.

Students evaluated pictures by whether they liked the character in the picture not by the physical appearance. When I asked them if they thought it was a good picture the response most predominantly received reflected the personality of the character. Students seem to have little training in critical analysis of illustrations.

In the days that followed I continued to take one or two reading groups and to introduce myself to the lower grades. Although I found these introductions very time consuming and tiring, they were worthwhile because teachers responded very positively and the students all had a chance to know me.

One of the most positive things I did, however, was the informal song sessions outside under the guango tree at lunch time. This kept me busy during long stretches of unscheduled time and gave me something productive to do. At the same time it kept me out of the teacher's way and kept me from disrupting their normal rest time.

As time went on I began to spend more time with the teachers during breaks and often got an informal interview about the books from the teacher during this time. When interviews with the children were being conducted, it was a time for arranging my plans for the next group of students. Even though the questionnaire was formed before the interviewing it allowed for flexibility and therefore I changed the specific phrases or descriptions to fit the group and the situation.

Summary of My Introduction to Patience School

I developed a special relationship with the teachers, students and principal of this school due, in part, to the fact that I made special efforts to become a member of the school.

I did this by assisting teachers in their classrooms. I asked them what they wanted me to do and took reading groups for them covering the stories they suggested. Also I met informally with teachers on a daily basis. Some of the teachers rode the same bus to school as I did. When we got off the bus we would talk about the political situation in Jamaica as we walked up the hill to school. Before school I met with the teachers in their classrooms. We discussed specific incidents that happened at school, children, or the Dr. Bird Readers. At break time I occasionally sat with the teachers who were running the `tuck' shop (canteen) where ice cream and snacks were sold. We often continued our discussion of the latest crisis in the political situation because the island was in a particularly high state of political unrest and it was foremost on most of our minds. During a good part of my stay at Patience there was a daily question of whether schools would close and teachers would go on strike.

The students were easy to meet. In the first two weeks at the school I visited every classroom. During my visit I introduced myself, explained that I was an American, and either told them stories about America or encouraged them to ask me questions. I asked them to tell me about themselves and during these discussions was able to gather demographic data about their families. After making the rounds of every class in the school, children greeted me freely and often came around me to ask me questions or just to talk to me. Almost every day I would spend most or all of the break with large groups of children gathered around me under the huge tree in the yard. We would sing songs that I taught them or I would answer questions about America.

With Mr. Davis it was more difficult to develop a rapport. He told me when I arrived at the school, with a letter from the Ministry informing him of my intentions, that he did not understand why I chose his school. As time went by he invited me to participate in school activities including an award ceremony for the children who had passed common entrance, leading a morning devotion, and attending a year end program for parents. As my stay proceeded he spent time talking with me about my progress and about the children. At one point he confided in me that at first he was apprehensive about having me at the school, but that he had come to realize I would work out all right. His letter (see Appendix I) to me at the end of my project clearly shows that he had changed his mind about me.

Selection of Students for Interviews

I requested assistance from the teachers with the selection of students for this project because I did not know the children and I wanted to include the teachers in the research process whenever possible. I told them that I wanted students from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds and different learning levels. However, students were selected for the interviews by the teachers on the basis of who was available when I was ready and who they thought would give me the best results. The teachers were concerned with giving me children who would cooperate as well as children who could read the books easily. They did not understand the needs of my research. I did not try to correct this because I felt that the effort was made as a gesture of their effort to please me and the good will was important to the success of my study.

The children from both fifth and sixth grade classes tended to be from the top level groups and were outspoken students. Students from the fourth grade were selected on a day when the teacher was absent and the teacher who was filling in was not aware of my needs and therefore sent me a middle level reading group. No students were selected from the low reading groups and no explanation was given for this except by the sixth grade teachers who said that the lowest group was not able to read the books well enough to assist me in the study. My own observation of the students in the low sixth grade indicated that this judgment was probably correct so I accepted the teacher's recommendation without question.

A total of thirty-two students were selected. Seventeen of these were girls and fifteen were boys. The ages of these students were from 9 to 12.

Seven of the ten sixth grade students had passed their Common Entrance exam. (There were only eight students in the whole school who passed for the year.) Of these seven all had achieved well enough on the exam to be given free placements in their high school. (Not all students passing Common Entrance are given free places. For example, at Manchester High School children are required to pay 100 dollars a term to attend the school.) All of the grade six students were from the top level reading group.

Of the ten grade five students interviewed five were above grade level and five were at grade level. However, one of the teachers noted that it was difficult to measure this because they were using only the Dr. Bird Readers and not placing the children into grade six level readers.

In the fourth grade ten students were reading on grade level and two were reading below grade level.

Analysis of Student Interviews

The student interviews were conducted in one or two sessions on different days for an hour to an hour and a half each. Both groups of grade six and one group of grade four were able to participate in two sessions while grade five and the other grade four had only one session. These sessions were tape recorded but I also took notes.

The student interviews consisted of five main sections: a qualifier of general questions about the students' familiarity with the books, questions about the story content, questions about the illustrations, questions about the language, and recommendations made by the students. (See Appendix J)

The Interview Setting

I arranged with the principal to use the canteen kitchen for the interviews because it was the only space that was not used during classes and it was a quiet space away from the classrooms. The room was a small room, about 9 x 15. It held a refrigerator, freezer and counter space. We worked by the freezer and refrigerator because that was where the electrical outlet was. As it turned out it was also the place that was well- lit. Students sat in a circle in the center.

For the most part the room was silent except for our group. Once or twice I saw children peering in from the outside of the school, but these onlookers never interrupted the group and I very much doubt that the students inside were aware of the children on the outside looking in. However, on more than one occasion there was a necessary disruption from staff that meant that we either had to stop our taping or adjust to the additional distraction.

Qualifying Questions

Qualifying questions were asked to determine whether students were familiar with the books and which books they had read. The children had not read all the books in school. However, in grade six all the students said that they had either read the books in class or at home on their own. Grade five students had read most of the books at school In grade four there were three books that the students said they had not read.

Questions About Content

There were several questions used to direct the student's attention to the content of the stories. The students were asked to reflect on stories that they liked or did not like, stories that were easy or difficult to read, stories that had characters that they liked or did not like, characters that were familiar and stories that told them something new or already familiar.

Students in each group had stories that they liked. When I asked why they liked the stories most of the children retold the story. When there was a reason given students responded that they had learned something, they liked the values expressed, and the content was familiar or interesting. Grade six students gave the most varied responses while the grade four students responded with retelling for each story that they liked.

When the grade six students were asked to talk about stories they did not like only two students responded. They chose stories with values or content they did not like. For example a grade six student, Joanne, was asked why she didn't like Midas and the Golden Touch. She responded, "Midas thought that riches was everything but he was wrong." Another grade six student, Dorothy, replied about Some of the World's Greats In Sports, "The boxing. Whenever somebody is in boxing, most of them get hurt." Grade five students had no stories they did not like and grade four students were not asked this question.

The students found the books easy to read. In most cases children said the reason was that the words were easy. They mentioned that the words were meaningful and interesting. Some of the students mentioned word size and pronounceability. One fifth grader, Karen, said that practice reading helped to make the books easy to read. "Because when I was five years old I learned to read very well and these books were just the benefit of that..." She continued that she found that the words were printed clearly.

In discussing the people in the stories, students liked characters who had `good' values. Cecile (grade six) liked the children in Much More Than Shells because they were brave. With the exception of Mary (grade six) each of the people selected related to some person or situation the student knew in real life. Cynthia (grade four) related the old woman in Good Follows Good to a woman named Gwen she knows. Students didn't like characters who possessed `bad' values. Debra (grade six) didn't like Ronald in The Rescue because "he was disobedient to his teacher".

Students in grade six found historical facts in the stories that were both familiar and unfamiliar. Frank said that he knew about the Maroons before reading Those Who

Left Jamaica but did not know that the English tricked the Maroons into leaving Jamaica. Students in grade four responded that the information they didn't know was the story line or content of the stories. Olivia said that she didn't know that Good Follows Good was about a lady begging. Several students replied that they didn't know about some aspects of football before reading A Game Called Football. For example Foster said that he didn't know there were eleven players on a side.

Questions About the Illustrations

Students were asked to discuss illustrations that they liked or that were familiar.

Students in grade four and five discussed the pictures that they liked. The reasons that they gave had to do with the story content. Gordon selected a picture in Marble Lady' because the statue talked to the little girl. When I asked why he thought this was a good picture he said, "The statue have a pretty face. She was a lovely lady. The little girl was friendly." No one gave any critical comments about the quality of the pictures. The second grade four group gave retellings when I asked them why they liked the pictures. When I pressed Cynthia about her response to the pictures in `Good Follows Good' she replied that the pictures showed kindness.

Grade six students looked for pictures that portrayed someone or some place that was familiar. The people they selected were chosen because they looked like someone they knew in real life. Students selected places and situations that were familiar in the second grade six group. Alan had been to Dunns River Falls and recognized the picture in `Much More than Shells'. Joanne found the nosebleeding picture in `First Aide' a familiar sight because "my sister's nose bleed when she was sitting around the table.

Pictures that were unfamiliar were mentioned because they contained people from foreign places or unusual scenes. Students in grade six mentioned people from China, India, and an American Indian. Their clothes and facial features were given as reasons why they knew they were not Jamaican. Cecile selected the king's daughter in `Kind Stranger' because "she looks like a ragged old lady". The second sixth grade group selected a picture of the Taj Mahal and a scene where a bedspread seemed to match the scenery. Joanne said that "the bed and the hills almost look alike" in `Keep Your Feet Off the Ground'. She also said that she had never seen an alligator and so the picture of one in `Crab Hunt' was unfamiliar to her.

Questions About Language

Students were asked to show their understanding of the `book' language through performance and discussion. They were asked to dramatize parts of stories that were selected by me. I specifically instructed them to use their own language to act out the stories. Students in grade five were also asked to reflect on this experience. In addition to these activities language was discussed in terms of specific phrases. Students were asked to define these phrases or to determine the value of the phrases.

Students in all three grades were asked to dramatize parts of one of their stories. The first group in grade six acted out part of `Crab Hunt using a theatrical form of dialect that is encouraged in the National Festival competition for school children all over Jamaica. They were very adept at this and had previous experience acting out stories in rehearsal for the Festival competition. The second sixth grade group also tried to use the dialect but were less proficient at acting out their parts. Grade five students also attempted to use dialect, but for the most part used the exact words of the text and needed prompting with their parts. Grade four students were unable to tell their parts in dialect and tended to use the exact language of the book.

Grade five students were asked to reflect on this experience and to tell me which way they liked the story better, in their own language or the language of the book. In general the group felt that the way they did it in their own language was better, but Paul and Lucille said they story in the book was better because it was more complete.

All the groups responded easily to the phrases they were asked to define indicating that they understand the language well. Grade six students discussed the characterizations I gave them and demonstrated that these also had a realistic meaning for them.

Recommendations

The recommendations made by students indicated that many of the same problems found in the Ministry study had not been solved.

Students in all three grades liked the books for the most part. However, students did recommend changes in story content, length, vocabulary and book format.

Grade six students felt that some of the stories could have been more exciting. Cecile said that the ending of Dream Come True was not exciting. "They should have told when he went to American or overseas and what did he do and how did the experience came." Joanne (grade five) thought that Ordeal at Sea could have been better if the bigger child didn't obey the smaller one.

Mary said the `Runaway Car' should have been longer. Grade four students thought that the words needed to be harder.

All of the students thought the books format could be improved. Grade four and five students were concerned with the printing quality, size of print and lack of color in the pictures. Grade five and six students found the books frail.

Analysis of Teacher Interviews

The teachers were interviewed once on the last day of school for about a half hour. This very unsatisfactory meeting took place at the last minute because the principal misunderstood my intentions and thought that I simply wanted to thank them for their assistance during my stay. Also he included all teachers K - 6 in his invitation. The interview was designed to cover the teacher's experiences with the books, questions about the content, the language and the illustrations, and recommendations. (See Appendix K) Because the teachers were not prepared for the interview they did not have copies of the books and tried to share mine as they made comments. The interview was cut short before we were able to discuss language or illustrations at length. I was not able to ask for their recommendations.

The Interview Setting

The teachers were interviewed in part of the sixth and fifth grade classroom. They sat at the children's desks and were somewhat cramped by the size and closeness. The tape recorder was placed off to one side on the only available level desk. The room was hot as it was the middle of the day and there was no current of air to refresh us.

Qualifying Questions

The teachers were asked about the arrival and distribution of the books. The new books arrived in November. Each child received a set of books for their grade level. Everyone was excited about the arrival of the books. The parents had to come to the school to sign for the books before they could take them home. Prior to this distribution there were copies of the series in school but the quantity was insufficient and the books could not go home.

The books were well used by grade 4,5 and 6. However, the children in the lower grade 6 group had difficulty using them. Mrs. Andy (grade 6) reported, "My set of children, they could not read very well and there wasn't any one to help them to read them...They were excited to get the new books and they started reading. (The better students who could read, read the books.) The slower ones now, they didn't enjoy it that much, but they were excited about them." Also some of the easier level books at the beginning of each grade were not used by the upper level reading groups. Children were encouraged to read these on their own. Mrs. Wakely (grade 5) added that ..."We didn't finish all of the books for the year. I remember them telling me stories from say the last book, Short Cut. Some of them read it but I didn't take it with them."

Questions About Content

The teachers mentioned several problems they had with the content of the books. For the upper level students the vocabulary was not challenging enough and the books did not cover a broad enough range of topics. Teachers in grade five and six would have liked to have more foreign countries mentioned. They compared the books to the old series they used First Aide In English a series from England. Mrs. Wakely (grade 5) did, however, mention that children found a local story about `The Troublemaker' easier than `There is No King as Great as God' which is about Africa. Mrs. Talent (grade 5) said she thought the problem may have been one of conflicting values, that the king was vain and the children did not like reading about him. Overall the teachers did not feel that the focus on Caribbean content handicapped the students.

Questions About Illustrations

The only response from teachers regarding the illustrations was that the original version of the books contained bigger and more colorful pictures.

Questions About Language

The teachers felt that the language in the books was appropriate because it was simple and the sentences were kept short. They made the observation that some of the language was not in standard English. (The implication being that it was in Jamaican dialect, a fact that is often followed by a statement about the low value of the dialect.)

Recommendations

Mrs. Lovely (grade 6) suggested that both the First Aide in English series and the Dr. Bird Readers be used together in order to provide enough geography and history for the upper level students.

Findings

The findings of this pilot study involve an examination of three issues which affected the methodology in the study that followed in Spring 1985. These issues are the development of successful communication, the design of the questions, and amount and types of information gathered throughout the study. These aspects will be discussed at length in the first four sections. The fifth section is a brief discussion of the reading strategies observed and the projected effect on this type of study. The last section is a comparison of this study with the results of the Ministry's initial evaluation.

My Ability to Communicate With Students, Teachers and the Principal

I had a high degree of success in developing a rapport with students, teachers, and the principal at this school. My efforts to meet students in their classes, to work with them in reading groups, and to spend free time with them on the playground allowed me to move about and talk freely with them throughout the research project. I was fortunate to be able to meet with teachers on the bus on the way to school, to talk with them before classes, and to assist them in their class work; this made it easy for me to maintain an informal relationship with them. Finally, my ability to spend time talking with the principal provided me with a 'seal of approval' from him that allowed me social access to most situations at the school. This acceptance seemed to cross any cultural, socio-economic, and racial boundaries that might have existed.

My ability to spend time with students and teachers provided them with an opportunity to become accustomed to my 'foreignness'. Students were able to spend enough time listening to me so they developed a familiarity with my accent and tone. Most of the time they could understand me. If they did not understand me they were not afraid to ask me to repeat myself. They also had a chance during the informal gatherings at break to ask me many questions. They became acquainted with my different ways. They learned many things about who I am and where I came from. At the end of two weeks my newness had worn off and I could move about without large groups of children following me.

However, even with the high level of acceptance I received, my own language accent and limited knowledge of the Jamaican dialect did continue to get in the way of successful communication. Sometimes I would ask children to 'translate' to other children for me if, even after restating myself, that individual indicated no clear understanding of what I had said. Other times, when it was not essential that I be understood, I abandoned my efforts.

The time I spent prior to interviewing was very important because it gave me an opportunity to become familiar with hearing the dialect of the children. I listened to them telling me stories, asking questions and talking among themselves. Slowly I began to pick up the tone and pitch of their spoken language, as well as some of the words and phrases.

During the interviews there were still incidents where I did not understand the text of what the student was saying. If I could get most of the idea I let it go. Sometimes I checked what I thought I had heard by repeating the student's response and asked for affirmation. Occasionally, I ignored it and went on to another question. There were times when the noise level made it almost impossible to hear what the children had to say. At these times we had to stop. Some of the interview was always lost in the process.

The Design of Questions

I found it necessary to examine the design of my questions so that I could accommodate the occasional inability of students to understand my accent and my own inability to use Jamaican dialect. I found that when I could repeat my questions and vary their form children were more likely to understand what I meant. For example, changing the wording of a question to use the request `Tell me about' got a clearer answer than a set of questions beginning "Was there a...? followed by a "Why?" question.

There were other questions that gave me problems. For one thing, I discovered that the children had difficulty understanding my frame of reference when I asked them if they learned anything from reading the story. Some of the children understood that to mean the reading that occurred during the interview, instead of the fact that I intended to refer to the first time they read the book. I was able to clarify that for most students as we went along. Still some of the answers I got to this particular probe were retellings, because the students didn't understand that I was looking for new information, not just the story line. As a result I got answers such as Olivia's response about Good Follows Good. She said, "When the lady was begging at the bus stop and none of the children was paying her any attention." which was a retelling of the story but gave no indication of whether there were any new facts for her in the story.

I tried to compensate for the children's difficulty in responding to analytical questions. I would ask them several short-answer questions and then follow up with one that was thought-provoking. I attempted to keep a momentum going by asking a succession of questions. At one point in listening to the grade four tape I noted that questions were asked to fill up time while students were thinking.

"The silence seemed to be deadly in these sessions." (undated diary entry) In some cases I got better responses but most of the time I felt that I may have put children off by hammering them with too many questions.

My rapid questioning and repetition did have undesired effects. The children's answers were sometimes cut short because I would repeat what the student said as they said it. As I did this I would interrupt the flow of what the student was saying. Sometimes they did not pick up where they stopped. I did this because I was concerned that the tape recorder might not pick up enough information.

Another thing that happened was that I would sometimes answer my own questions before giving the children time to respond. This happened as I tried to ask many short questions, rewording them as I went along. Sometimes in listening to the tapes it felt as if I was firing questions too rapidly.

I discovered that questions were likely to be leading if I was having difficulty getting a response from students. I would begin to ask short-answer questions and eventually this would develop into the use of a leading question or even answering the question myself.

Most of the questions I asked were easily understood and children were very eager to answer. Questions about what the children liked or didn't like, what they thought was easy or difficult and the vocabulary seemed easy to get across. The difficult questions seemed to focus around the issues of reference of time, and familiarity or unfamiliarity.

The Amount and Type of Information I Could Glean From the Children

The lessons that I conducted with children in reading groups gave me an opportunity to try out activities and various forms of questions during the weeks prior to beginning the interviews. I found that the students were very good at retelling the stories, at answering questions requiring specific details and finding proof within the stories for the answers they gave, at telling the sequence of the events in a story, at understanding specific vocabulary, and at telling their own stories. Questions directed at these activities were not problematic and children were eager to respond. They often did so at length.

During the interviewing, there were problems that emerged. I noticed that the children came up with one example, no more, for most of the questions I asked. For that reason I felt that the spontaneity of their answers was not always real. Children also tended to answer from the same context. When one child mentioned a story there would often be another one who followed with another answer from the same story.

When I asked questions that required critical thinking, the children were less responsive than to those requiring literal answers. The students had difficulty with questions that began with `Why?'. Sometimes they would respond with retelling of a story, and other times they would give one word or a very short phrase for an answer. Questions that asked `What do you think of...?' would bring a response of `good' or `bad'.

It was also apparent that the children had little or no critical analysis of the illustrations. When I asked children to talk about people in the pictures and tell me if they would make a good friend or not, children were hesitant to answer. It seemed that it was difficult to translate any feelings they had about the characters to real life situations. I especially noticed this when I asked children to describe characters. The children tended to use verbs to describe the people. They would retell what the character did in the story instead of reflecting on the personality or looks of that person. The moral value of the story stood out above any physical characteristics.

Another type of analysis I tried was to encourage children to look at the artistic quality of the illustrations. When I asked them to talk about whether a picture was a `good' one or `bad' one, they would recount the events of the story. Again a value was placed on the story or behavior. If the picture was of a`good' person or about a `good' event the picture was viewed as `good'. If the event or person was `bad', the picture was `bad'.

The most difficult task was to get information about the children's knowledge of language and any differences in language that they saw in the books. It was clear that the children had not given the language in their books much thought. When we dramatized the dialogues most of the children attempted to repeat the exact wording of the books. In the two groups that did use dialect there was confusion over which language form was the best. The children in grade five liked using the dialect to play the stories, but some of them thought that the actual words of the book did a better job of telling the story. It may have been a result of the work they do in their classes where they are accustomed to retelling stories using the exact words in the books. There were two groups, the first group of grade 6, and the second group of grade five who were able to portray some of their story in dialect. The ability of these two groups to translate the story into their own dialect indicated that they did internalize these stories and that they were able to switch language codes without losing the meaning of the stories. Other groups demonstrated that they understood the story even if they could not act it out in dialect. All groups of students indicated that they had no difficulty understanding the vocabulary. Both examples of individual words and phrases were responded to with understanding. These facts show that the language did not give the children a problem and that there was a high degree of story comprehension.

The final set of questions for each group was designed to get recommendations from the students about the books. Most of the comments focused on the books' format but several comments about content were also made. It was clear from the comments that students took this question seriously and had given it some thought before I suggested it.

Amount and Type of Information From Teachers

The teacher interview conducted in this pilot project indicated that the teachers were very willing to participate. They responded to questions at some length.

The teachers seemed most interested in talking about supply and distribution of the books. The fact that the books did not arrive until November meant that for two months their program had to operate without the texts. However, when they did arrive everyone, teachers, students and parents were extremely happy.

The next area of concern was over the reading levels of the books. Teachers of advanced groups found them too easy while teachers of remedial groups found them difficult. The general agreement, however, was that they were more appropriate for slower groups of children than for the advanced readers.

When asked about the content of the books, I got mostly general responses rather than a discussion of specific stories. I think that this was, in part, due to the fact that only my set of books was present. The teachers' responses indicated that there was a mixture of stories, some that would be foreign to students such as There is No King as Great as God, but many would have been familiar, such as the stories about Anancy and Aesop.

The only question that was not understood was my question about the illustrations, "See if you remember anything in the pictures that represents a positive characteristic of Jamaica." Since the only books that we had were my one set, this was probably an unfair question, but the response I got indicated that they didn't understand what I was asking. Mrs. Talent said, "the first set (the original sets sent out by the Ministry) was bigger pictures and in color. They were better."

The teachers confirmed my findings that the language was suitable. They indicated that the story was not always in `standard English' and gave this as an example of why the books were easily understood.

The biggest problem with the teacher interview was that the timing was poorly planned and as a result rushed. I did not get to ask most of the questions I had hoped to ask. As a result a connection was not made between the responses that the children gave and what the teachers thought about the books.

The result of the teacher's interview, however, was that they were extremely positive about the books, their use and their appropriateness for the children. Even though this interview was short it confirmed most of what I discovered during my interviews - that these books were indeed very relevant to the experiences of these children.

Reading Strategies

The work that I did with students in their reading groups provided me with information about the reading strategies that were used in the classrooms. Stories were read in unison by groups of about twelve to fifteen children. After reading the story the teacher would ask literal questions and often have students find the passage in the story that gave the answer. Students were encouraged to respond by retelling the story as it had been in the book. These strategies were reflected in the types of answers I got to questions. Students seemed most comfortable with literal questions. Their tendency was to try to retell the passage that contained the answer. For other questions requiring critical questions students responded frequently with retellings.

Comparison to Ministry Study

The results of this pilot study confirm the findings of the Jamaican Ministry of Education study which was done prior to the books going out into the schools. The findings in both their study and mine confirm that children all over the island, in a variety of settings, find the stories interesting and enjoyable to read. The stories that were best liked were those that contained morals that the children valued. In addition, those children in my study indicated that they liked the books because they learned something, and that they found the content familiar and interesting.

The recommendations provided by students at Patience reflect many of the same major concerns voiced by children in the first evaluation of the books that was completed by the Jamaican Ministry of Education. Students are still concerned about the content, story length, vocabulary and format. Some of the stories would be better if there were changes in the endings they said. The greatest number of comments I received however, were due to the presentation of the books. There were still concerns about the printing, the illustrations and the format of the books. While the producers did add some colors, (each grade level received one color) the students voiced concern over the lack of appropriate coloring.

There were also instances where individual stories were seen in a similar perspective. For example, both studies indicate that there were concerns with the ending of the story `Dream Come True'. In the Ministry study it was the teachers who brought up this concern, but in my study it was brought up by the students.

The teachers in both studies expressed concern about the reading levels of the books. The difficulty of the books was too great for non-proficient readers and too easy for advanced readers. This problem remained in spite of the addition of the teachers manuals which were intended to assist teachers with the presentation of the stories.

As in the Ministry report, the teachers in my study were very favorable of the books project and the appropriateness of the stories for these students.

There were some differences between the two findings as well. My students said that they wished Runaway Car could have been longer. The Ministry respondents thought that some of the stories needed shortening. In some cases discrepancies in perceptions are indicated. The Ministry study shows that No King As Great As God was well liked, but my study shows that the story was not well understood. Since this information came from teachers, not students, it may be that it is a reflection of the teacher's reaction to the story. Students in the Ministry study indicated that they did like the story, but in my study students did not mention this book with either positive or negative reactions.

While the Ministry reported a teacher who thought that

Anancy stories were not known to his students, my teachers reported that they felt they would be familiar.

Unlike the Ministry report I did not receive comments about the need for vocabulary lists. By the time these books were produced a list of new words was provided for each story at the end of the book. It is clear that the Ministry was able to correct some of the weaknesses it discovered after the first evaluation, but others remained. I believe the main reason for this was connected to the cost of printing.

In addition, to the findings of the Ministry my study shows that the students found the vocabulary interesting and meaningful. In fact they told me the words were easy, and that they appreciated the type of facts and historical information that was presented. Some of the students even mentioned new information that they had learned in the stories. My study also shows that students are able to identify with appropriate stories about Jamaican and recognize those that were about foreign places or fantasy places. In the retelling dramatizations that students performed, I learned that students understood the story schemas, but there was a difference between groups and experiences that led to greater comprehension by some students and not others. My examination of specific phrases and words showed that the vocabulary was familiar to the students. Students easily defined these in their own terms.

The teachers commented that they thought the books had a good balance of familiar and unfamiliar stories. They indicated that one reason the stories may have been easier for some of their students was the fact that the story was not always in 'standard English'. The only new concern expressed was that the books would not arrive in time.

Conclusions and Research Recommendations

The pilot study was very successful because it gave me an opportunity to test out my plan, my questions and my process in a non-threatening environment. I not only came away feeling that I had learned a great deal from the children and teachers, but also felt comfortable with the design of the research. I also was able to discover several faults in the design which I could change and which would probably make the project go more smoothly.

The timing of the plan was an important aspect that I was able to test out. Having two weeks to introduce myself to the school was not only valuable but probably essential to the success of this study. Spending informal time with students, teachers and the principal was a primary source of gaining trust. However, two weeks for the interviewing was not enough time.

The selection of students needed to be more carefully monitored. I allowed teachers too much leverage in the selection process and ended up with students who the teachers felt would perform rather than a true cross-section of students. This could bias my study.

It was helpful to use the initial individualized interview. I was able to get background information for the student profiles. This was important to show any bias that might occur due to the selection process of the students. This activity, however, served not only as a means of finding out who my students were, but also as a means of getting to know them and helping them become comfortable with me.

I decided the basic format of the research should be left in tact. The sequence of the research plan worked well. The introductory phase of the research would be incorporated in every school. Every effort would be made to become an integral part of each school by visiting and participating in classes, by holding informal discussions with teachers and by assisting the teachers and principals in any way they felt would benefit the school. The interview would follow after trust and a rapport was established. The order of the questions would also remain as it was in this study. Using qualifying questions to introduce the students to the interview situation provided them with an opportunity to settle in comfortably. They were able to answer these questions easily and then listen to their voices on the tape recorder. These questions also provided me with essential background information about the quantity of stories they had read during the year. I decided that this was an important way to begin the interviews.

The next three sets of questions also worked well and I decided to maintain a strategy of beginning each section (content, language, illustrations) with questions about what they liked and what they thought was easy. Then I would proceed to the more difficult questions about what they found familiar and unfamiliar.

The things that I decided to change or add did not affect the overall procedure used in the study. Below I will list the changes I made in the research design.

In order to give students more time to adjust to the tape recorder and to give myself the ability to concentrate on what students were saying, I decided to include the use of the tape recorder during the initial individual interviews with students. This allowed me the freedom to pay more attention to the students at a time when they were just getting comfortable with the process of answering the research questions, some of which they might find probing or thought-provoking.

I decided to use more frequent, but shorter sessions for the group interviews with students whenever possible. The interviews would not last longer than one hour. One interview would be used for each of the three areas covered: content, language and illustrations. This allowed me time to probe students in greater depth on their answers to try to discover what they found relevant about the content, language and illustrations. These sessions would work best if they were scheduled on consecutive days. In this way the students' schedule would be consistent. I felt that this would assist teachers in planning and encourage students to attend on those days.

I decided to take careful notes during the interview in order to compensate for poor taping conditions and my inability to pick up on some of the dialect when it is out of the context of the speaker.

Although I concluded that the content of the questions should remain in the same sequence as presented in this pilot study, wording on many questions could be changed to "Can you tell me about... or Tell me about...?" to try to help students give more complete responses. At the same time the quantity of questions should be controlled by me to allow children the greatest possible opportunity to respond. However, clarity should not be sacrificed for this need. As a result of this study I found that it was important to remember that my job is to listen not to teach. Therefore, I needed to control my own contributions to questioning and probing as much as would seem natural in the situation.

There are several questions that I would eliminate from the next study. I would not ask the students to dramatize the stories and I would not focus on language differences unless they brought it up themselves. I also would eliminate the request for students to read portions that they liked and the request that students connect the illustrations on the cover of a book with the title. These do not give information about what the children thought was or was not relevant.

I would encourage students to look for language that they found difficult rather than focusing on what I thought might be difficult or easy. And I would suggest that they examine the content and illustrations for parts that they felt represented Jamaican life the way they know it.

With these few changes I felt that the research would flow better and provide me with even greater evidence of the relevance that children found in these stories.

Summary

In this chapter I have discussed the pilot study used to assess my research methodology, my ability to communicate and the type of responses I could expect from both teachers and students to my questions.

I have described the methodology and its implementation at Patience School. In addition, I have made preliminary analysis of the responses from both students and teachers to my questions.

I included a comparison of my study to the Jamaican Ministry of Education's preliminary study.

As a result of my findings I made some recommendations for procedures that should be maintained as well as questions or expectations that should be changed.

Footnote

* A religious sect in Jamaica characterized by the wearing of long uncombed plaits and the use of marijuana for spiritual development.

In 1930 Ras Tafari, great grandson of King Saheka Selassie of Shoa, was crowned "Negus of Ethiopia" and he took the name Haile Selassie. This event precipitated the birth of the Rastafarians of Jamaica who saw this as an act of God. "In Jamaica, an almost forgotten statement of Garvey who, on the eve of his departure for the United States was supposed to have said, `Look to Africa for the crowning of a Black King; he shall be the Redeemer.'( Barrett, 1977, pg. 81) "No one knows how the name `Ras Tafari' was adopted over the title `Haile Selassie'. The name `Ras' in Amharic is the title given to Ethiopian royalties, comparable to the English title `Duke'. `Tafari' is the family name of the King... The name `Rastafarians' is a Jamaican rendering of `Ras Tafari' and is the name given to the members of the movement."(Ibid. pg. 82)

CHAPTER 6

AUTHORS AND ARTISTS INTERVIEWS

This chapter will report information gathered about the authors and artists through interviews. I will give a brief profile of each author and artist in the first section. This will be followed by a description of the writing and production process. The third section will include a discussion of the stories and the intentions of the authors and artists. This chapter will be concluded by the findings of the interview analyses.

The interviews took place in Kingston and Jackson Town, Jamaica; Boston, Massachusetts; and New York City. The settings included private homes and offices in the workplace. The interviews consisted of three parts: background information on the individual, their intentions in producing these books, and a reflection on the process and product. Interviews were conducted after a signed researcher agreement was received. (See Appendix L)

In the length and depth of these interviews there was a significant amount of variation which was due mostly to the availability of the authors and artists for interviewing. Some of the interviews such as those for Diane Browne, Marguerite Curtin and Susan Shirley took place over several weeks and in three sessions. Donald Miller, Dennis Ranston, Peggy Campbell, Dorothy Whitfield and Betty Anderson were interviewed twice while others including Beresford Nicholson, Karl Philpotts, Jeff Schatzman, Jackie Powell and Annette Miller were interviewed in one session. Some of the interviews took place in settings which were conducive to private conversation while other interviews took place in a more public setting which kept them on a more formal basis.

Information I include about Lawrence Carillo and Henry Bamman was received in correspondence and is very brief. Information I include about Everard Palmer was given me by Diane Browne and Marguerite Curtin.

Profiles of the Authors and Artists

All but two of the major authors and artists were available. Several of the artists who completed work for only one or two titles were not interviewed. (See Appendix B for a complete list of the authors and artists.) For Lawrence Carillo (an American consultant), his influence on the project will be discussed in relation to the authors and for Marguerite Curtin (a Jamaican artist who coordinated the initial phases of book production and illustration), her influence will be included in relation to the artists.

The profiles provide information about the diversity of the background experiences that the authors and artists brought to the project. This is an important aspect of the project and was effected deliberately by the designers of the project.

Author's Profiles

Major Contributors

Diane Browne (32 stories)

Diane Browne comes from Kingston, Jamaica. Her mother is of English heritage. She is quite blond. Her father is slightly darker than Diane. Her twin brothers appear to be white. They have light skin and straight hair.

She described her family as a middle-class working family. Diane attended a private preparatory school that catered to middle-class children. There were "few children (that) looked like me. All the children were lighter." The shade of skin color and texture of the hair were the important measures of class and status.

She attended St. Andrew High school in Kingston. After leaving St. Andrew she attended the University of Toronto and later taught geography.

She began writing for her own children and then for others. Her concern was that Jamaican children were being exposed to a `white' world not relevant to their own.

Peggy Campbell (11 stories)

Peggy Campbell came originally from Pedro Plains, St. Elizabeth, which was strictly an agricultural area. She is one of six children. Her mother was a teacher and her father was a headmaster.

She started school when she was about three or four years old. She used to walk to the school. At eleven Peggy attended a boarding school in Hampton. Afterwards she taught for one year. After that experience she went to Sierre Leone where she taught another four years before returning to Jamaica.

She has worked on several book projects in Jamaica. For Junior Secondary Students she worked on a series called the Guinep Series. They used standard English but kept the language close to the Jamaican. There was a deliberate attempt to construct sentences close to the Creole but maintaining `proper' grammar. The stories involved common sense themes.

She also worked on the LMW series (Language Materials Workshop Materials for primary grades 1 - 3.) with Dennis Craig of the University of the West Indies. she worked on this series for 3 - 4 years. It was primarily her work with the LMW series that brought her to work on the <u>Dr. Bird Readers</u>.

<u>Karl Philpotts</u> (24 stories)

Karl Philpotts comes from Kingston, Jamaica, an area called Richmond Park, St. Andrew. He has four siblings but remembers growing up with cousins as well. His father and mother were civil servants.

Karl developed an interest in spiritual and world affairs. He learned about Africa and the Scriptures. At twelve he read <u>The Third Eye</u> trying to understand life.

Manchild in the Promise Land, especially chapter 9, influenced his early literary `career' adventures.

When Karl encountered Rastafarianism (a religious group known for their interest in a back to Africa movement, especially to Ethiopia where Haile Selassi was King) he said that "Rastafari was born in me. I realized my mission." He studied the "true history of my people and the scriptures". This information he learned not from educational institutions but from the world.

While in school Karl attended St. George's and then Excelsior (both private schools). Later he went to the University of West Indies where he majored in International Relations. His goal was to make a contribution to humanity and this has been influenced `greater and greater by the African religious nature'. He said he has been inspired by Haile Selassi.

His writing experiences included working with the JAMAL foundation where he wrote books for adult education (literacy training). He said that his first book was a success. He felt that it was inspired and mentioned that he would pray before he wrote. The message was a universally acceptable moral. His work on the JAMAL series got attention from the Ministry and he was asked to work on the Dr. Bird Readers.

Minor Contributors

Jeff Schatzman (3 stories)

Jeff Schatzman is an American who first came to Jamaica in 1969 with the Peace Corps. He was born in Brooklyn, New York. He was a first generation American. His father is Polish and his mother is German.

At the University of Texas, he majored in English and Political Science. During the Vietnam War he was drafted. He chose to enter the Peace Corps and received a deferment from the military. While in the Peace Corps in Jamaica he was offered a position in the Ministry of Education where he had an opportunity to write and publish. His work at the Ministry and on a Language Arts Project for JAMAL eventually led him to work on the Dr. Bird Readers.

Dorothy Whitfield (1 poem)

Dorothy Whitfield is a writer of children's poetry. Much of which was shared with children during her years as headmistress of St. Hugh's Preparatory School in Kingston. She comes from the family of a Methodist Missionary. Her mother was Jamaican. When she was young she lived in the country in St. Ann. She attended St. Andrews High School in Kingston and later during the war went to school in England. When she returned to Jamaica she became headmistress at St. Hugh's where she stayed for twenty-eight years. Diane selected her poem about John Connu for use in the series.

Three of the writers were not interviewed. Lawrence Carillo contributed one story. He was recruited from the United States where he was contacted during an International Reading Conference. He came to the project with a wide experience in reading education including being a senior editor of a basal series and an author of Teaching Reading - A Handbook. He was hired as a consultant and editor for the project.

The stories that Everard Palmer wrote were not written specifically for this series, but rather adapted for the series.

Henry Bamman is a professor Emeritus from the United States was consulting editor on the Teacher's guides. (These will not be discussed at length in this dissertation.)

Artists' Profiles

Major Contributors

Betty Anderson (illustrated 6 stories)

Betty Anderson was born in Kingston in an artistic family. Both grandparents and her uncle and aunt were artists. As a child she and her twin were encouraged to put on plays and to think creatively. She lived with her grandparents until she was five years old. Her grandfather was a storyteller. He helped to develop her imagination. He told stories that were mostly fantasies, about places abroad, the sea or unreal situations. There was radio but no T.V. "We had to visualize."

She attended Robinson's Prep. School and later St. Andrew's High School in Kingston. After high school she worked in a printery before entering art school where she chose to study printing.

One of the early projects that led to her work on the Dr. Bird Readers was some illustration she did for a book titled, Water in the Guard by Eddie Burke. It was put into dialect by Ann Garcide. "They asked me to read it and illustrate it for Oxford University Press."

Annette Miller (illustrated 15 stories)

Annette Miller comes from Oracabessa, St. Mary, a small seaside town in the country. Her father worked on a banana plantation and her mother was a housewife. She grew up by the beach but attended a boarding school, Bishop, in Mandeville. Later she attended another private school, Immaculate, in Kingston.

Her artistic talent showed as a child. "I used to draw a lot as a child." At first she used crayons but later became interested in graphic design, lettering, still life and oil painting.

Donald Miller (illustrated 16 stories)

Donald Miller was born in Ewarton, St. Catherine, a small town not far from Kingston. His mother was a postmistress and his father a collector of taxes. When he was four he came to Kingston to live with his grandparents. His parents joined him when he reached six years of age.

He started school after his parents joined him in Kingston. He enjoyed school very much. He attended Southemere Prep. Later he went to Jamaica College. He intended to be a lawyer and then a judge.

He remembers not liking school and drawing caricatures of the teachers for which he was soundly thrashed. It was not until the end of his high school years that he took up art seriously to meet his O level requirements. (`O level examinations' are part of an English system of testing for placement in advanced education and certain jobs.) After working for several years he decided to go into art and chose graphics because this was the area he enjoyed the most.

Jackie Powell (illustrated 4 stories)

Jackie lived in a small town in the country, Santa Cruz, St. Elizabeth. She attended Bethlehem Primary in Malvern. In the sixth grade she became interested in art. She used to prepare charts for her teachers and later in high school worked on diagrams. By the 4th form she had chosen art for her major and was taking art classes. Her experience began with drawing comic strips: Archie and Beetle Bailey; and expanded to landscape paintings. As an intern at Hampton High School she entered Festival competitions in art.

Susan Shirley (illustrated 8 stories)

Susan Shirley is an American citizen from the suburbs in the United States. She met her Jamaican husband when she attended the University of Michigan. They married and later came to Jamaica where she has been living for 10 years. One of the pastimes she described that has influenced her work was her drawing of the women she saw in the market place. Most of the time she sketched out of her head, but occasionally she was able to take photographs using a telephoto lens. Most of her work is completed for private buyers but some of her work is sold in galleries in Jamaica.

Marguerite Curtin (oversaw production and layout)

Marguerite came from the Crossroad area of Kingston. When Marguerite was seven years old she attended Wolmers Academy. There she began painting local flowers.

Later Marguerite studied at the University of Wales and then the University of Manchester for teacher training. She spent two years teaching in Warwickshire then she returned to Jamaica and taught at St. Andrews. She also taught at Merl Grove High School where she learned that the students needed more visuals. It was not until the 1970's that the British publishers began putting pictures of West Indians in the books.

Marguerite was the person who organized the artwork for the Dr. Bird Series. She had received training in book publication at the Ministry of Education.

Minor Contributors

Beresford Nicholson (illustrated 1 story)

Beresford Nicholson was born in Kingston and has spent all of his life there. He attended school at Half Way Tree and then at Kingston College. He started by drawing cowboys from comics. In primary school he did no art work but after his third form at Kingston College he did nothing but art. Later after working at clerical skills for awhile he studied art at Jamaica School of Art where he specialized in graphics.

Dennis Ranston (illustrated 1 story)

Dennis is a Jamaican commercial artist who spent 15 years in England. His time there included studying art at London Polytechnic and graphics at London College of Printing. During his stay in England he began his career of book illustration. When he returned to Jamaica he began his own book publishing company, The Guinep Press.

Cedric Green, Joshua Higgins, Lacelles Lee, Prudence Lovell, Desmond McFarlane, Michael Osbourne, Maxine Sutherland and Samere Tansley were not available to interviewing.

Writing and Production Process

In this section the process of book production is examined as well as the intent of the writers/artists. This production process is important because it directly reflects the story of how the books were made relevant to the Jamaican culture. It is a story of the concern for making materials relevant and the cooperation needed to do so.

Special Roles

In the process of producing the *Dr. Bird Readers* there were several people who assumed roles in addition to their role as an author or artist, and there were several people who were influential who were not authors and artists.

Grace Eweka and Jeff Schatzman were influential in designing the project and proposing it to O.A.S. for funding. Shortly after the beginning of the project Grace Eweka left the Jamaican Ministry of Education and went to Africa.

Jeff Schatzman acted as editor during the writing process during which he tried to maintain a balance between fiction and non-fiction pieces at each grade level.

Marguerite Curtin worked with the artists to proof the books. Marguerite said that the key to the books were the charts that she kept during production. "Every step of production was listed." It was color coded. The project was designed so that for each story the type face and illustrations were laid out with Marguerite.

Lawrence Carillo acted as a consultant and editor for the project. Although he also did some training, his major influences were in vocabulary control, rewriting, encouraging school try-outs and school visits by writers. He also laid down some technical foundations for the books: number of illustrations, print size, and size of books. His goal for the project was to use Jamaican settings and language developmentally arranged. He felt that there should be a spread of readability levels for each grade to accommodate placement and promotion practices used in the schools.

Henry Bamman acted as a consultant on the teacher's manuals that were written after the books. "The skills covered were those to be found in any of our American basic readers." Lawrence Carillo points out that "the guides are an important part of the series, particularly considering the differences in training and experience among Jamaican teachers."

Special Talents and Goals

There were also special talents and individual goals that many of the authors and artists contributed to the production process. The largest concern, however, that guided the writing of these stories was an attempt to make them as authentic as possible.

Diane Browne was considered as the "grammar specialist." She also maintained charts which helped in the control of vocabulary and recorded information as each story was complete. Her vocabulary lists were kept on the wall and were important as they could only introduce a certain number of new words. They were able to share the new words as they wrote. The information from the charts also assisted in keeping a balance between fiction and non-fiction, local and foreign stories. She also recorded the number of books and page numbers as they were produced.

Peggy Campbell worked on both the LMW (Language Materials Workshop for grade 1 -3) and the Dr. Bird Readers. She proved to be a link between the two. This was an important contribution because the language and the stories of the LMW series provided the foundation for the Dr. Bird Readers. This series focused on teaching oral standard English structures before introducing them in text. The subject matter of these stories was local but not exclusively. There was a mixture of culture from both rural and urban settings. The same philosophy and mixture of stories were present in the design and production of the Dr. Bird Readers.

Diane Browne was very interested in presenting a reading experience which would be relevant to the children. "I want to give them the happiness of their own images." Much of her writing reflects her own experience growing up. When she was questioned by Lawrence Carillo about her `feisty little girls' ("little girls who insist on answering back") she responded that they must come from her own childhood. She said, " I did so as a child and my children do as well." In addition to using stories from their own history, the authors conducted research. Diane Browne mentioned that she conducted research at `The Institute; the National Library in downtown Kingston.

Karl Philpotts was considered a major influence with his use of moral themes. However, he reports he did not see himself as the only one that was religious. He did say though that he used prayer before he wrote and that he considered using moral themes to be important. "I was closer to the pulse of the youth and traditional values", he said.

Karl said that his personal goals in writing stories for the series were to "foster a sense of identity of the youth" and to "stimulate an interest in reading". He says that since an educational system transmits values the stories should not be empty. One important consideration that he mentioned was the fact the writing was being done for children, not literary intellectuals.

Three of the artists accepted major roles in the production process. In the early stages Donald and Annette Miller were responsible for overseeing much of the artists' work. They also assisted in designing the layout of the stories. A dummy was made that indicated where each illustration would be placed in the book. Annette started the series while she was art director at the Ministry but was replaced by Jackie Powell. Jackie remembers designing the final stage and assigning freelance artists. Towards the end she took over paste-up under the direction of Donald. Dummy copies of the books were made to begin pre-testing in the schools.

Donald Miller coordinated the designing of the books and assignment of freelance artists to work. He described the illustrating process as one that is similar to an author of a book except the artist puts his words into visual form. He feels that each artist contributes their own prejudices to the work.

Jackie saw her work on the Dr. Bird Readers as a way of changing the system that gave her foreign books to read which confused her. Her goal was to provide maximum readability through illustrations. She thought it was important to relate to the Jamaican environment.

Betty Anderson was also very concerned with presenting relevant materials to the children and did so in a variety of ways. She felt that it was important for the children to identify with the characters and therefore included a representation of more than one race and a balance of the sexes. One of the influences on her work was the comments she used to hear from her students at Knox College who were concerned with how the people should look in their art. "Mostly they felt that they should make them (characters) White". She specifically made a man selling coconut into a Rasta. Another aspect that she felt was important was to take into consideration how the children would see things. For example, she tried to draw what she imagined the children would see from the bus in one of her illustrations. She used photographs to help her.

Dennis Ranston's concern was that the books would not overload children visually. He feels that in today's world children are overwhelmed with information both visually and auditorally. He wanted to present a human element in his illustration to help the child "live the part".

Susan Shirley was able to use her Jamaican experience as well as her childhood memories from the United States in producing her illustrations for the books. One of her major contributions was that her illustrations of North American Indians were realistically portrayed.

The artists also felt the need to use research in their work. Some of them used photographs to research some of their illustrations. Susan Shirley set up some situations to photograph to help her get particular scenes. In one case she photographed her son and a neighbor playing soccer. In other cases, she used photographs to help her get the faces right. She said that she had some difficulty getting the Jamaican faces correctly drawn. Other artists used a variety of references. Books and magazines were frequently mentioned. For one story Donald Miller even went to the zoo to study the animals.

Although there was a diversity in the talents and goals of the writers and artists, one theme was overwhelmingly present in their comment. They wanted to provide materials for the children that was both relevant and interesting. Much of this concern came from their own experiences with texts in school that were irrelevant.

Selection of Authors and Artists

The authors were selected on the basis of prior work they had done. They all had experience writing either for children or adults at the beginning stages of literacy. A variety of illustrators was selected in order to give as many artists as possible a `piece of the cake'. All the artists were graduates of art school. Most of the artists were in graphics or painting. They were selected on the basis of their work and style. There were no rigid criteria for their selection.

Distribution of Stories

Consideration was made to the process of distribution to try to match abilities with needs and to try to distribute the opportunity. This was one way that the production of the books encouraged relevant contributions from the authors and artists.

The authors were given a list of subjects to select from. They talked about `things' before they actually began writing.

The artists' recollection of the distribution process was mixed. Donald Miller remembered discussing the stories with the authors and then selecting the ones that he would like to illustrate. They did rough drawings in order to help select artists for particular stories. Other artists remembered being assigned stories which they then read and illustrated.

Steps Taken in Initial Production

The stories were written grade by grade. This helped with the vocabulary control. The language used in the writing was standard Jamaican English. Even so Peggy Campbell remembered "loud roaring arguments" about which language to put in. What will they understand? What do they need even if they don't understand it? What would be the common experience? She said that the "nicest part of this experience was the arguments..."

The series took a strong remedial focus and was based on a developmental scale that Lawrence Carillo discussed in his interview. One of the main concerns was readability. It was decided that they would use grammatical structures which were introduced in the LMW series. The vocabulary from LMW would also serve as a basis for the Dr. Bird Readers since they preceded them. Even so readability began two grades below grade level for each grade in the series. The first box for fourth grade readers contained grade 2 - 4 readability in its stories, the second box contained grade 3 - 5 readability for students in the fifth grade, and the third box contained grade 4 - 7 readability for sixth graders. The number of new words depended on the grade level. There were 3 - 4 new words per page. As a result, there was a repetition of words especially in the earlier stories. Lawrence Carillo used the Dolch word list and Fry readability formula to check familiar word levels. Also attention was paid to word patterns (meaning and sentence structures) that would be familiar to Jamaicans as compared to those that would be familiar to English or American readers.

Content of the stories was considered and an effort was made to include stories with a social studies or science basis. The illustrations were important "particularly in clarifying meaning of vocabulary and the main idea." The group editing and rewriting process was important for achieving these goals.

When a story was completed the artists would read it before beginning their work. Donald Miller remembered reading each story two or three times, as he made sketches of the points the characters would develop. The style that was used depended on the story. Betty Anderson remembered this experience as an opportunity to experiment with different styles. Some styles worked, and some like pencil and shading took too long. Once the drawings were complete they would go to Marguerite and then they would be reviewed. Donald Miller, Annette Miller, Jeff Schatzman, Marguerite Curtin and sometimes Betty Anderson consulted together. The artists would be asked to make adjustments as needed.

The next step in production was to test the books out in the schools. A set of dummy books was made and tried out with children in schools. Observations were made in classrooms for attention, interest, and answers to questions. These were followed by interviews with children and teachers conducted by Jeff Schatzman, Lawrence Carillo and some of the writers.

The final step in writing was to produce the teachers' guides. Information gathered during the pretesting situation was useful in suggesting teacher exercises and procedures for word attack and vocabulary development.

Printing was by Montrose Printery in Kingston in 1980. Reprinting in 1983 was by the Gleanor Company. The purpose was to ensure that every child had a set of the books. The funding for this came from a variety of public and international agencies including the O.A.S.

The process used in producing the books involved a cooperative effort that evolved as the project proceeded. While many of the events were unintentional, it is possible to see how in retrospect they led to stronger relevancy. The process of selecting authors and artists with varied backgrounds created an opportunity for meeting a broader range of relevancy. Since authors and artists were involved in the selection of stories, their own interests would allow for realistic portrayal of characters, settings and events in the stories. The charts for vocabulary and the emphasis on balance of stories encouraged authors to interact about stories. The coherence of the stories and their presentation clearly adds to the effectiveness of the project.

The relationships that developed between authors, artists, and authors and artists kept them focused and working together. The editing sessions for the writers and group consultations for the authors helped them to improve at every step. Their emphasis was on making the books authentic and one of the great strengths they had was the ability to test out material on each other.

Discussion of Stories

The stories will be discussed here in order to look at the ways which authors and artists attempted to achieve their goals. It is interesting to note here that many of them relied on their own childhood stories, past experiences and memories to guide their work. In other cases authenticity was achieved by research or observation. And, in one case even prayer was used to guide the writer.

The discussion of the stories, taken from the individual interviews, was divided into several categories: issues dealing with the cultural relevance of the stories, the artistic intentions, and the desire to fit stories into the general curriculum.

Relevance to Jamaican Culture

The largest group of comments related to attempts made by the authors to produce materials that were relevant to the Jamaican culture. This was the most important category in terms of this research because it represents the intended goal of the project and the focus of my evaluation. I examined the relevancy issues in terms of local settings, familiar experiences, characters who are recognizable, moral values and themes, relevant historical information, language, and relationship to ethnic heritage.

Local Settings

The authors mentioned stories that used local settings which the children could recognize by name or description. Two stories represented Port Royal, a small fishing village. Another story described limestone which covers much of the island. There are limestone caves which children may have visited. One story was about a mineral bath located inland on the southeast corner of Jamaica. The story was given its name after the place, Bath.

Familiar Experience in Jamaica

The stories came out of memories of growing up in Jamaica. One of them was a story that developed out of an experience a family had with a 'helper' (domestic worker). The helper left her job because of the noise that the metal louvers made. She said the `duppies' (ghosts) were making the louvers creak. Another story came from a neighborhood incident. It was about a little boy who climbed up on the roof of a house and fell off.

Dorothy Whitfield remembered seeing John Connu festivities at her home as a child. Anancy stories (Jamaican spelling) were remembered from childhood by Karl Philpotts. He used to listen to the gardener tell these stories.

Stories came out of the author's adult experiences too. There was a story that reflected what Diane Browne saw happening with her children's friends in school. This story looked at the situation new students may find themselves in, especially when they are brighter than other students in the class.

One story was about a helper who sent her children to live in the country for a period of time. In the book the mother had to leave her three small children with her sister while she went to look for work. The story came from Marguerite Curtin who had a helper who worked for her after having to leave her children.

Karl Philpotts used a grandmother as the primary guardian of the boy in one of his stories because he said it is a familiar situation in Jamaica today.

The artwork also came out of the artist's own experiences. They used their own childhood memories, but sometimes renewed them before completing the work. Donald Miller said that the work that he did in one of the stories reflects "places I know and remember as a child." He spent time at the beach in preparation for these illustrations.

Another artist used an image of her husband's uncle's country house in Catadupa as a model for a country house she wanted to visualize. She said she was influenced especially by the feeling she got at night when she visited the house and tried to put this feeling into her illustration.

Some of the artists related more personally to the stories. They talked about how this affected their work. Annette Miller said that The Runaway Car "reminded me of some mischief I was into." This is a story about a boy who gets into a car to play in spite of his friend's warning. The car slips into gear and rolls into the chicken coop. Relating to the mischief helped her to get involved with the story as she illustrated it. In another story she related to the character. She said she "felt as if I was in it". Both of these are examples of how individual personality affected the relevancy of the stories. The closer the author or artists felt to the story the more likely there would be a realistic portrayal of the characters and events.

Characters Who Are Recognizable People

The artists used a number of models consciously and unconsciously to assist them in creating the characters in these stories. One artist thought that the emperor in The Emperor's New Clothes looked like a gentlemen at the Ministry of Education.

One way of developing characters was to watch people and pick out features to use. Jackie Powell said that the little girl's hair in A Terrible Fright was "like mine used to be". When Dennis Ranston talked of the mother in A Dream Come True he said, "check out the lady with the children and see if they can't find this lady at home somewhere." While she is no one in particular he said that she is "seen so often".

Another way was to use themselves as models. To draw the boy waking up in A Dream Come True, Dennis Ranston went through the steps himself and then checked it out in the mirror.

Moral Themes, Values and Lessons

A major feature of the Jamaican culture that appeared in the authors' comments was the effort to write about a moral theme, value or a lesson.

Many stories tried to show what happens when you become too involved with yourself. Morals included: what can happen to a child who is a show-off, what happens when you `follow fashion', (tend to copy what is done by others) and what can happen when you have false pride. Common themes included the `boy who cried wolf', `all that glitters is not gold', and `pastures always look greener on the other side'.

Values included in the stories were: the importance of being honest and of keeping values that help us towards our aims and objectives; the importance of being kind to elderly people; that rain and water are more important to life than partying and fun; and the importance of hard work and sacrifice because it can help you to get what you want.

My Father shows the difference between material and emotional gifts. The father who lives far away brings a present to the little girl and her mother is `jealous of the gift that she can't provide'. Meanwhile the little girl does not know her father and feels uncomfortable around him. In the end the little girl tells the mother, who is afraid of losing her daughter's affections because of the lovely present, that "this (the present) is not what matters."

The authors also included lessons in behavior. One story tries to show that disobedience often gets you into trouble. Good manners towards others today will come back to you later on when you need someone to be kind to you.

Stories also included lessons in prejudice. Much More Than Shells by Diane Browne attempted to illustrate the point that tourists are people and that even though we are different we are the same. In this adventure some Jamaican children meet a child from Boston and become involved in the discovery of a couple of foreign men who are smuggling drugs. "Tourism not drugs was meant to be the theme," but Diane was concerned that it may have gotten lost in the adventure.

In another story, Broom Man, Peggy Campbell addresses prejudice against the Rastafarians. In this story Peggy tried to highlight the religious nature of the Rastafarians and the fact that the father of one of the boys tried to instill good principles. She shows both sides of the nature of Rastafarians by using two boys to show conflicting behaviors.

Other stories tried to teach the need for responsible behavior and dealt with practical solutions to real life problems. One story demonstrated some practical aspects of making things simple. `Remember to close the door so the fire will not go out.' There is a logical solution to solving problems.

One of the stories even contains a message for teachers. It depicts the importance of the teacher-student relationship and the need for teachers to help students have success. "Failure discourages children."

While not every story was discussed, it was quite clear that the majority of fiction stories were written with some particular moral, value or lesson intended and that the authors considered this an important element in culturally relevant materials. These teachings reflect the authors' perception of the lessons in the Jamaican culture.

Historical Importance

The authors reflected historical events reflecting the Jamaican cultural experience in their stories. This aspect of the books is also very important to the development of relevant stories. Since there were no Jamaican history books available the use of the readers was a particularly good means of contributing to student's knowledge of their cultural heritage.

The stories included the history of the maroons (runaway slaves living in the hills) and about slavery. Another story about Mary Seacole shows the importance of the contributions of Jamaican women. One of Peggy Campbell's stories tells how Jamaica got to be a place with people from so many different parts of the world: African, Spanish, Jewish, English, Indians, Chinese, and Syrians. "Out of many, one people."

Language

While there was no concerted effort to use dialect terms in the stories, there was an attempt to use local terms when possible.

The terms `coal pot' and `sash windows' were included because they were remembered from childhood. A number of local expressions for Jamaican vegetation, `Woman's

Tongue', `Old Man's Beard', and `duppy cherry tree' were other terms also included.

Peggy Campbell changed and added to the original language in at least one story to make it more relevant to the children. "Big long prickle" was used in the sentence "the lion's paw had a big long prickle sticking out of it." (pg. 4 Androcles and the Lion) because `thorn' would not have been familiar. `Prickle' was something they would know. `Long' was added to emphasize the size.

Relationship to Ethnic Heritage

Stories were incorporated into the series that related to the ethnic heritage of the children that would be reading these books. The relevance of these stories would not appear immediately, but the feeling of `roots' is very strong in Jamaica. Stories about where they came from are important to the people.

There is no King as Great as God was included because the writers were looking for an African story. Peggy Campbell included a story about China and India because of the Chinese and Indian children in the schools. She carefully chose her materials not to include things that would cause children to be teased. She highlighted "things that could be commonly recognized as beautiful or worthwhile".

These comments indicate the careful consideration that was made to present all cultures in a realistic and positive manner.

Relevancy to Other Cultures

While the major thrust of the book project was to relate the books to Jamaican culture there was also an objective to include materials for balance that came from foreign cultures. An examination of the stories that were not meant to be relevant and why they were included gives us another perspective on the book project.

Stories From Outside the Jamaican Experience

Folktales, like The Cat Woman and the Spinning Wheel which is an American folktale by Tess Thomas, and mythology, like Androcles and the Lion and Midas and the Golden Touch, were included. The Amazing Journey depicted the modern technology of the space age in America. The story about The North American Indians and Cowboys provided historical material from a non-Jamaican culture.

The illustrators included things, like the Dutch clogs in Frederick and Catherine, in order to provide authenticity in these stories.

Artistic Concerns

There were several areas of concern for the authors and artists that affected the final product and therefore should be mentioned here. Authors assessed the types of story genres included and artists looked at their illustrative styles. It was considered that a variety was needed in both of these areas in order to provide quality in the series.

Story Genres

The authors were quite concerned about keeping a balance in their stories. This balance was reflected not only in their concern for both local and foreign stories, but also in their concern for different types of stories. They were particularly cognizant of the number of fiction and non-fiction stories they included in the series.

Fiction stories included mysteries, adventures and fantasy. Non-fiction included stories that dealt with both specific historical information and general knowledge.

One poem was used and one story was done in a cartoon style because the authors thought students should be exposed to these forms.

Illustrative Style

While the authors were concerned with having different genres represented in their stories, the artists were also concerned with diversity in their work through their ability to vary styles.

Caricature, cartoon, realism and fantasy were all used in the illustrations. Betty Anderson used patterns for texture in An African Tale and a linear style in A Man and His Donkey to set off the Greek clothes. Each style was considered carefully for each of the stories that was illustrated. The illustrative style was an important consideration because if students were to recognize the characters, setting and events portrayed in the stories.

Curriculum Needs

Curriculum requirements placed some limitations on the work of the authors in terms of their content and language. However, there were not specific guidelines provided for them from any official source. Instead, they used their own guidance according to the suggested curriculum for content areas at each grade level and selected stories that they thought would supplement the curriculum. In addition, they made decisions about vocabulary control and significant events they thought should be represented.

Some of the stories fitted into the Caribbean syllabus. The story of the buried man in Volcanoes is included in the geography book.

Other stories covered themes or topics that the authors felt were important to the curriculum. Androcles and the Lion and Midas and the Golden Touch were included because they were stories the students should know. Some stories were included because they involved topics that authors felt needed to be discussed. For example, two stories were included because they talked about the Rastafarians and `children who don't know their father'. Both of these topics involve emotional issues in Jamaica. Many people debate over the social status of the

Rastafarians and many children have to deal with fathers who are not able to be at home. Another two stories were included in the series because they addressed the Year of the Handicapped.

The content was not the only way that authors tried to meet curriculum requirements. Stories used word repetition in order to meet the requirements for vocabulary control. The number of new words was limited in each story. If an author wanted to use a word not on the list she or he tried to encourage someone writing an earlier story to introduce that word. The repetition of words was sometimes limiting in terms of artistic style. By controlling the vocabulary some of the realism may have been lost. Readability by grade level was the key factor controlled by vocabulary.

Reflective Process

The reflective process was included in these interviews to give authors and artists a chance to add to comments they had already made and to evaluate their own work in terms of their own sense of satisfaction and sense of success in achieving relevancy. As a result the discussion focused on those stories that authors/artists liked, the problems that interfered with their progress, and the changes that they felt needed to be made. Several of the authors/artists included a concluding statement about the project.

Stories the Authors/Artists Liked

The authors were satisfied with their stories for the most part. They liked the settings, the characters and the plots. They felt they succeeded in representing relevant situations, people and events.

Some of the stories held particular interest because of their historical value. For Diane Browne An Angel of Mercy was special because she had always liked the story of Mary Seacole. Other stories brought pure pleasure. During Just Fooling Donald said he just kept smiling as he used a lot of expression and humor in the faces of the characters. The closer the author or artist felt to a story the more likelihood that it would be realistically portrayed.

No specific stories were indicated as having been disliked, but there were problems mentioned as the authors/artists reflected on the series and as these are discussed the less popular titles become evident.

Problems With the Stories

There were some boring stories. This was attributed to the vocabulary control, but they tried to make it up in the illustrations. Some of the authors admitted that the illustrations were better than the stories.

Some problems inhibited the relevancy of the books. The controlled vocabulary eliminated the use of some of the local terms. Diane Browne said that when she writes without tight control she writes better stories.

There was some controversy over content. Karl Philpotts recalls that there was a conflict in the Ministry of Education over whether it was appropriate to include stories about the Rastaman. The Ministry argued that it was not necessary to include negative aspects of the culture. Diane Browne also reported that there were other arguments that reflected the different values within the Ministry. While she concurs that the main thing was religion, she says there was a controversy over family style as well.

Some of the authors had concerns over individual work. For some of the stories there was a criticism about the use of personification. Some of the characters did not seem quite real. They were too good or their behavior seemed contrived. In one story Peggy Campbell pointed out a coincidence that was unbelievable. The father just happens to bring a dress from England which is perfect for the Festival concert that the little girl wants to attend. Her mother is unable to afford the dress herself.

The authors felt that some of the stories would benefit from rewriting.

Problems With the Illustrations

The artists also mentioned problems with some of their work. Some of the illustrations were too sketchy. "It is detail not the scene that causes (problems),"said Donald Miller.

Some of the faces were not just right. There was concern that the authenticity of some of the characters was not right. There was concern over a Chinese shopkeeper, who might alienate the Chinese. In another story illustrated by an American there was concern voiced that the characters did not reflect the Jamaican child and specifically mentioned were dress, hairstyle and features. The same artist patterned the little boys after her own children who were of mixed Jamaican-American heritage and said that she thinks they weren't "rootsy enough". They were too middle class. She mentioned difficulties with facial features and making them look brown-skinned.

There was also concern voiced about another foreign artist who used a milk pan that would not be familiar to Jamaican children.

Some of the artwork was criticized for distortions, incorrect perspective resulting in `ugly' people. The producers were concerned that the work might not reflect what children see.

A general problem that faced the illustrator was regarding relevant content. Betty Anderson said creating relevant illustrations was difficult because some children were exposed to M-16's while others knew T.V. and rocket ships.

One of the problems in the final product was that the artwork was limited by certain colors for each grade due to publication costs. Grade four illustrations used orange, grade 5 used green, and grade 6 used red. Decisions for the colors was arbitrarily made. Marguerite Curtin said that there should have been some selection by title. For example, Volcanoes was done in green. It should have been done in orange.

These problems with the illustrations reflect the concern the production team had that the pictures used would not be identified correctly by the children.

Production Problems

The problems mentioned in this section indicate the awareness that the artists had for presenting a balanced representation of the culture and also in printing quality illustrations that could easily be recognized by children.

Although there was great attention to organization, more was needed. When the authors got half way through the project they decided what to do. More planning in the early stages was necessary. "Editing should include criticism of the story as a story," and the author should expect rewriting on that basis, reflected Peggy Campbell. As a result some things slipped though.

One of the artists said that space, time, money and the amount of research were problematic in the production of this series.

There were also problems in the printing of the books. In Anancy and Cow the numbers were cut off, printing was uneven and pages overlap. The text in some stories was inside the illustrations so that the type actually interrupted them. The print itself was not satisfactory. The covers were poorly done.

When the books were reprinted details and subtleties were lost. Annette Miller tried to include texture in her work but she said that they did not get the textures right.

One of the problems was the poor quality of paper used in the reprinting process. The Gleanor company used newsprint.

Distribution and Follow-Up

Distribution of the books to the schools was poor. Some schools did not get books, others got short supply of books, and others got them late in the year. The teachers guides, according to Jeff Schatzman, were formidable and left the teachers with too much freedom. This was supposed to be rectified by teacher training but the inservice aspect of the project was never completed. Part of the problem, Jeff said, was that once the production of the project was finished there was no one at the Ministry that was directly responsible for the follow-up.

Recommendations for Change

A few suggestions for change came out of the interviews. Some of the stories needed editing and there was some desire for additional content or subject areas.

Other stories could be made into dramas. Some stories needed editing from a literary point of view. One author suggested that there should be more child-centered stories to counter our authoritarian society. Another author would have liked to see more sports stories and something cultural about artists, potters or musicians.

The interviews indicated a favorable reflection on the book project. Many of the participants expressed overall satisfaction in their interviews. It was clear that they did not see this as a economic venture but rather one that contained spiritual and artistic rewards. Donald concluded that he would like to see more of the same done each year.

Findings

The authors and artists brought a diversity of experiences to the process of creating and producing the Dr. Bird Readers. Their strengths included the fact that they came from different parts of the island, different socio-economic backgrounds and different educational experiences.

Each of the authors and artists was allowed a certain amount of professional independence, but the foundation of the project was the cooperation and cohesive quality of their work. Common goals guided them in their personal creative endeavors without too much constraint. The theme was to create a reading series that was relevant to the lives of the Jamaican readers.

Relevancy was achieved in many ways. The authors wrote stories about their childhood memories, their visual images of Jamaican scenery, and familiar characters. The content of the stories reflected moral themes, values, and lessons that were considered by the authors as representative of the Jamaican way of life. In many stories historical information about Jamaica was able to be included. Finally, a number of local terms were used.

Authors and artists conducted research to insure authenticity in their work. Library research as well as photography was used to validate the stories and images.

Concerns such as vocabulary control and grade level sometimes inhibited the authors from developing the relevance they hoped for, but this does not seem to have been an overwhelming concern. In most cases, the authors felt that the vocabulary lists guided their work and made the series cohesive.

In addition to the concern for relevancy, authors were concerned that there would be a balance of stories. This balance included both foreign and local stories, fiction and non-fiction, realistic and fantasy. Relevancy was contrasted by including the stories from other cultures. Some of these stories were factual but folkstories and other literature pieces were also included.

Artists were concerned that there would be enough variety in their work. An assortment of styles was included by some of the artists intentionally but also because of the large number of artists involved.

Some concern for developing a relationship between the Dr. Bird Readers and the standard curriculum of social studies and science curriculum was reflected in the selection of stories. While this did not specifically add to the cultural relevancy for the children it certainly would relate to the lessons in those subject areas and that then would become the basis for relevancy.

There was an overwhelming sense of satisfaction with the project that came across in the interviews. Both the authors and artists agreed that they were able to achieve a high degree of relevancy. At the same time they felt that next time they would be able to do a better job.

Summary

This chapter examined brief profiles of the participants who produced this set of books in order to examine the background experiences they brought to this project. It then looked at the process that was used to prepare stories and illustrations that the authors and artists considered relevant. Individual stories were discussed to show authors/artists intent and the creative techniques they used to achieve relevancy. Finally, this chapter shared the reflections made by the authors/artists six years after the books were produced and their interpretation of the project's success. The next chapter will examine the readers perspective of the project.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL INTERVIEWS

This chapter will describe the three schools visited during this research and examine the responses given by fourth, fifth and sixth grade students and teachers in the schools to questions about story content, illustrations and language in The Doctor Bird Series.

The chapter contains three sections. The first section will introduce the schools and the students. The second section will provide an analysis of the student interviews and the third section will provide an analysis of the teacher interviews. At the end of each section I will draw conclusions about the analysis presented here.

In the first section, each school will be examined in three parts. First, there will be a description of the contextual situation (setting, and demographics). This information was gathered from observation and informal interviews with principals and students. Second, a discussion of the nature of my introduction to each school will be included. These findings were recorded in research notes and a diary. Third, a profile of the students recruited from each school will be presented. These profiles were developed from individual interviews conducted prior to beginning the group interviews. (See Appendices M and N)

The second section discusses students interviews. An analysis of these interviews will include discussions of many aspects of the content, language and illustrations as the students perceived them. It begins with general information and a qualifier. Students discuss stories they like and then I examine their ability to identify realistic stories about Jamaica. Students discuss setting, characterization, and plot in terms of relevancy to their lives. There is also a brief discussion of stories that the students find foreign. Comments made by students about the format, and use of the books will be included as well. Finally, their own recommendations will be given for improving or changing the books.

The teachers' interviews are analyzed in the third section. The discussion focuses on their perspective of the content of the stories, illustrations and language and how it was taught. There are a few comments about the teacher's manual followed by recommendations for change.

Introduction to Schools and Students

Hummingbird All Age School

Description of School Setting

This school was located in the Kingston area in the parish of St. Andrew. This location is in the urban center for Jamaica. The population of Kingston and St. Andrew combined, according to the 1982 census, is 524,638. (The Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1982, pg. 6) Hummingbird is situated in a economically deprived area but is not far from the local shopping centers and commercial district of New Kingston.

To get to the school I had to go North from downtown Kingston away from the commercial and governmental hub of Jamaica and past the newer commercial district of New Kingston. Hummingbird is on a street that comes off a main avenue. The street is lined with houses that are small cement or wooden structures. Each yard is separated from the road by either low cement walls that you can look over, or fences made of chain or pieces of zinc. Inside, each yard has fruit trees or a shade tree. Little grass appears under the trees, most of the yards being hard packed dirt. Small wooden shops are interspersed between the houses. The shops sell fruits, vegetables, bread and other basics. Many of the shops are only about twelve by nine feet in size. Others are open structures about three by two feet. The latter are right on the street. The vendor sits on a box or chair beside the stall. Buses run down Willow Creek Road and driving a car there is easy because the road is well paved and maintained. But, it is a long walk from the main road if you miss the bus and do not drive.

A gate opens into the school. To pass through the gate with a car I had to ask one of the children or higglers (vendor) who were always gathered at the gate to open it for me. Keeping watch over the gate meant that `undesirables': spectators, beggars, `mad men' (mentally ill persons) were kept out.

Once through the gate the road swung around a large concrete playing field. The higglers sat under a large mango tree by the gate. Large Poinciana trees grew on the perimeter of the playing field giving some relief from the sun. In the middle of these trees a flag of Jamaica greeted the children each day. The first building in the school was a low narrow building that housed the early grades. Next to this at a forty-five degree angle was another low building. This housed the principal's office and the middle grades. On the far side was a two story building that housed the upper grades.

In any one of these buildings there were as many as seven classes housed in a large narrow room with portable chalkboards used as dividers. Each class held up to seventy children at one time. The children sat at the typical small wooden desks that I saw in most Jamaican schools. As many as four children would sit at one desk. In some classes there were insufficient desks and children had to sit on the floor or stand. Because of the closeness of the classes and the number of children in each class, the noise level was high most of the time. Teachers had to shout over the noise, sticks were banged on desks for attention and children recited in unison.

The school had electricity, a telephone and an intercom. By comparison to many other schools I visited in Jamaica this one had up-to-date and modern conveniences.

My work took me into the middle and upper grades.

Demographic Information

Children at this school told me that their fathers were involved in the following occupations: farming, factory worker, mechanic, plumber, electrician, tailor, carpenter, fireman, police, taxi driver, doctor, lawyer, politician. The mothers worked as helpers, secretaries, homemakers, shop keepers, teachers, nurses, higglers, and dressmakers. The school had no records as to social class level of its students, but I was told by the teachers that children came from middle and lower income levels of society.

Records kept in the principal's office indicated that there were 561 students in the school with 10 trained teachers.

Summary of School Entry

During the initial interview the principal was enthusiastic about having me come, but when I arrived I found that his schedule was so busy that we rarely had time to talk about the work I was doing. School began at 8:00, but I arrived at 8:15. Even so my notes show that students were still arriving and getting settled. As I entered, the reception I got from students was friendly.

I spent about an hour in each of the fourth, fifth and sixth grade classes during my first three days. I introduced myself and let them ask me questions. I was also able to take reading groups in most of the classes.

On day one the first thing that I noticed was the noise level. I wondered if the reason was that teachers were absent, but I did not see children running or hanging around. I learned quickly that the noise was something to live with in a school that housed so many children together in long buildings without partitions between classes. As I visited classes I saw that it was not an unproductive noise. In Mrs. Spinx's grade five class I observed a reading period, the entire class working together, about 60 children. She asked them to "read softly" to find out what was happening and then the class proceeded to choral read the story. As they read the teacher stopped them for further clarification of the story. She concluded the lesson by saying "You are going to finish reading the story for yourself." Most of the children had their own books. While this was a group lesson, I was told that they usually read in three groups. This was a top level reading group.

I noticed as I visited the lower level groups that performance and noise level became more problematic as the reading level of the group dropped. This may have been that fewer children could keep up with the choral reading and the facilities were less equipped. I noticed that the behavior was poor. "Quite a few children have no desks and sit on the floor at the back of the room." One teacher had a difficult task for she was responsible for two classes at once. These classes, unlike the top level classes, combined phonics and linguistic exercises for their instruction. I also noticed that these children had fewer books which were in a poorer condition than those belonging to the upper level classes. "Some children, the teacher says cannot distinguish letters or numbers." All of these factors may have contributed to the lower reading level of these children in spite of the Dr. Bird Project.

While I started out observing in the classrooms, by day three I was teaching some lessons to children. In grade six classrooms I taught math lessons and told stories as a means of introducing myself.

By day five I was introducing myself to the children who I had selected for the project. Teachers recommended students that they thought met my criteria in terms of varying abilities and socio-economic backgrounds at my request. Since I was unable to spend sufficient time in the classes to get to know students personally I had to rely on the teacher recommendations. As a result the sample of students may have been biased to represent those with good behavior who would cooperate.

Throughout my stay at Hummingbird I was left on my own. Teachers rarely had time to talk to me. My contact with the staff was minimal and I was not able to develop the type of relationship I had hoped for. I believe that this affected their interest in being interviewed and attending the workshop on `Psycholinguistics and Reading' that I offered and then presented on my last day.

I tried to spend time outside with the children at break or lunch time but found this to be highly unsuccessful because of the large numbers of children at this school and the novelty that I provided as an outsider and foreigner. As a result the only people I built a relationship with at this school were the children directly involved in my project.

The Interview Setting

The principal scheduled me to work in the library in the mornings between nine and twelve. The library was the only available space. There was one problem with this room, however, and that was there was no electricity. Every day boys from one of the upper grades would connect a very long extension so I could have electricity to operate the tape recorder.

The library was a second floor room in the two story building. The only light we had came from the slots in the concrete that served as windows and ventilation. We worked at a small wooden table that I placed near the outside wall to get light and so the extension cord would reach. The metal chairs we sat in screeched on the cement floor if we shifted in our seats, but the children were very good not to move around much during the sessions.

Profile of Students

Fourteen students were selected to participate in the study from eleven classes. These students were divided by grade into three groups. Based on the experience I had with student groups in the pilot study these groups were kept to a maximum of six students and a minimum of four. As a result I selected two students from each of the three classes in grade six while grades four and five needed just one student from each of their four classes. Students were divided into classes by reading abilities. The selection of students included all the reading levels; top, middle and bottom.

An equal number of boys and girls were able to participate from each grade. All of the students appeared to be Jamaicans from African heritage. When I questioned them about their heritage they all responded that both of their parents were Jamaican. In several cases they said that included grandparents as well.

In examining the life styles of the children I found that they were from lower middle and lower socio-economic situations. (See Appendix O) The following economic categories were determined based on home visits I made with some of the children and the accounts that the children themselves gave me during the interviews. Nine students were considered living in a lower middle class situation. Five students considered to be from the lowest economic level. The home visits helped me to verify their reports.

Cane Country School

Description of School Setting

The setting for this school was in a small rural town in the midst of cane fields and sugar production in the Western section of the island. The 1982 census showed a population of 6,150. (The Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1982, pg. 7) I entered the town by driving past the large sugar factory in an adjacent town where many people worked. This center was a hub for transportation to travelers and goods to other parts of the island. While the center appeared to be a busy commercial district, in fact, there were few stores (as compared to Kingston or Montego Bay) where one could shop. There were, however, a dentist and two doctors in town. For most of the outlying districts the people came to Cane Country for these services or had to travel to Montego Bay or Kingston.

The residential district was spread around the main intersection where buses exchanged passengers and goods, and the few stores and services were located. There was a wide range of homes in this area including wall (concrete) houses and board (wooden) structures. While many of the people lived very simply at a low standard of living there were examples of people who had middle level incomes. One of the houses that was pointed out to me early on in my stay was a two story home owned by a doctor. It was the only two story home that I saw in this town or in the surrounding areas.

While a large portion of people were involved in the sugar industry the town's close proximity to the rural tourist industry provided many people with opportunities to get jobs at hotels and restaurants or to operate their own shops in the crafts market. Having a job in one of the hotels guaranteed a modest income but did not allow for much in the way of luxuries, and those who worked in the sugar industry comprised a variety of income levels.

Unlike the school in Kingston there was no fence around this school. Instead I crossed a grassy hill to get into the school which was surrounded by fields. There were several large shade trees, but the main one was in the center of the playing field. When children were not playing cricket under it, goats from surrounding farms would sneak in and eat the grass.

The school had three long buildings. In two lower buildings on the left of the entrance the lower grades were housed. The building that I worked in was directly in front when I entered the facility. All the buildings were concrete, but the fourth, fifth and sixth grades were housed in a two story structure. The building was a rectangle broken only by the red stairway (looking much like a fire escape on an American structure) at the center front.

The principal worked out of the library which boasted of a fairly new selection of books. I was impressed by seeing a bulletin board decorated with `SSR, sustained silent reading', but when I questioned students and teachers they did not know what it meant. This was a large sunny room with modern furniture. However, there was limited use of the room because lunch money was collected there and the government issued nutri-bun was distributed from there. The principal had an office at the end of the second level, but I never saw her work in there.

At break time children would line up for their free distribution of nutri-bun and milk or purchase snacks from the various higglers that sat under trees. The school ran its own tuck shop where frozen drinks and snacks were sold as well.

While the building appeared quite modern and clean, there was no electricity or telephone at this facility. My tape recorder had to run on batteries.

Records indicated that there were 1,309 children enrolled for two sessions. In the morning session there were 12 teachers. Class size for grades four, five, and six was about 55. The afternoon session was similar.

Demographic Information

According to information I gathered from the children, they came from lower and middle income families. When I visited classes children reported that the majority of their parents worked in the following occupations: farmer, sugar factory worker, dressmaker, teacher, shopkeeper, mechanic, police, soldier, electrician, and mason. Other occupations that were less frequently reported included: laundry, domestic, bookkeeper, pastor, cabinet maker, postmistress, fireman, nurse, hotel worker, security guard, a doctor and a dentist.

Information that was provided from the school showed that the enrollment for 1986 was 645 boys and 664 girls. There was no ethnic or social class information available through the school.

Summary of School Entry

Adjustment to the school setting here at Cane Country was difficult. Once I had met with the principal briefly and told her what I wanted to do, I was left on my own. I arranged visits to the grade four, five, and six classes. I felt little interest on the part of the principal or teachers in what I was doing. During one class visit the teacher kept checking her watch and would not smile. "I cut my talk short because I did not feel welcome."(undated journal entry) On the other hand other teachers bent over backwards to make me feel welcome. This behavior on the part of all the teachers I identified as a prejudice towards me. I didn't like the feigned welcome any better than I did the aloofness. I was concerned as to whether parents would react in a similar fashion and wondered if I would be able to get the signatures I needed.

My relationships with the children did not go smoothly at first. My field notes state, "...these children seem to have little experience with foreigners as demonstrated by their frequent calls of "whitey, whitey", constant curiosity (they stand and stare) and the fact that they often try to touch my skin, crowding around me...Some are also rude to me. ..Make faces at me; laugh at me; mimic me, etc. There is an attitude in this area towards foreigners that the children express." (undated field notes)

As with Hummingbird All Age School, the teachers were relied on to select the students. However, in this situation since I had little contact with the teachers my message requesting students with varying socio-economic backgrounds and varying reading levels was not conveyed directly. In some cases it was given by the principal or another teacher. As a result I tended not to get students from the lower reading levels.

I was very concerned that my relationships with the children selected for the study at this school could be more difficult to develop. I spent more time initially with the children in an attempt to prepare them for the type of questions I might be asking. I took a copy of Whistle for Willie by Ezra Jack Keats and read it to them. We talked about the pictures mostly.

I had little opportunity to get to know the teachers because there was no central meeting place and I never felt welcomed by them. The evidence that this was so came when I was challenged during my workshop presentation at the end of my stay. Several teachers asked me how I could make suggestions for them when I came from so far away and knew so little about Jamaica. I responded that they were correct about my knowledge of Jamaica, but that I thought I had some knowledge of reading that they might find useful.

Interview setting

I was assigned to a small room, about twelve by fifteen feet at one end of the second story. It was a dark room because the only light came through louvers in one small window. When it rained hard we had to shut the louvers and on at least one occasion we had children trying to peer in by climbing up the water tower scaffolding next to the building. It made such a racket I stopped my session and scolded the children outside, but it was not always possible to keep children from peering even though the windows often were not fully opened. We did try to keep the grilled gate at the entrance to the room open so we could get air, but children would occasionally slip away from their classes and come to watch. The room was very hot due to the lack of moving air. We crowded around one table because there were desks filling up the rest of the room.

Profile of Students

Thirteen students were selected to participate in this study from 5 classes. Two students participated from each of the sixth grade classes, four from the one fifth grade and two from each of the fourth grade classes. There was a mixture of students from top readers to low readers.

Four boys and nine girls were in the final selection. Ten of the students appeared to be of African heritage and reported that both parents were from Jamaica. Louis reported that both parents were Jamaican but his father was white with "pretty hair". Louis had a fair complexion and appeared to have Chinese heritage. Andrea also reported that both parents were Jamaican but that her mother was from Canada. She had a light complexion. Monica reported that her father was Jamaican but her mother's family came from India. Her appearance showed the influence of her Indian heritage. I counted these three as having a mixed heritage.

Children from this school represented middle, lower middle and lower economic class families. Based on the information that I received from the children and from the visits that I made in this community, I considered that six students were from middle economic levels. Two students were considered from a lower middle economic situation.

Five students were considered from the lower economic category.

Seaside Primary

Description of School Setting

Seaside Primary is located in Montego Bay on the North coast of Jamaica. Montego Bay is a large rural-urban area that is known for its tourist industry. The East end of town is entirely devoted to this industry but one can find hotels and restaurants interspersed throughout the business section of town as well.

The 1982 census gave the population of Montego Bay as being 70,265. (The Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 1982, pg. 6) It is easy to see that people from a wide variety of ethnic groups live in this area. One has only to walk down the street to see people of African, Chinese, Indian, and European decent. The demographic information I received from children also supported this variety.

Seaside Primary is located on the West side of town. The ocean is below the school and mountains rise above it on the other side. To get there from downtown Montego Bay it is necessary to drive or take a taxi. Many of the children come from within walking distance.

The school is located on a side street off the main road that goes to northwestern Jamaica. It is located at the end of a residential area.

The school was surrounded by chain link fence about ten feet tall. The entrance, however, was through a tall cement fence that had iron gates. When school was in session I had to tap on one of the side gates to get someone's attention in order to enter. Security seemed very tight.

The school was contained in two two-story buildings connected on top with a passage in the middle making it similar to an H shape. It was a cement facility with the typical window slits I found in most of these structures, but some of the building had full cement walls between rooms. Classes were self contained in these rooms. The enrollment for this school was indicated to be 687 students with 12 trained teachers. Each class averaged about 55 students, although some went as large as 64 and one, a special education class, had only 31. The rooms were very crowded as I found to be characteristic of Jamaican schools, but the special education class was especially tight. When I visited this room, I literally found myself blocked in.

In the center of the buildings was a garden with flowers. A walkway circumscribed the garden and allowed children to move easily into the classrooms. The principal's office was located on the left side and faced the garden. At lunch time the tuck shop was set up just outside this office and managed by teachers and older students. Higglers were kept outside the school itself. They set up in the parking lot in front of the school. At break and lunch times the gates would be open for children to move freely.

The school was relatively new and had the convenience of telephone and electricity. There was a teacher's/music room with private bathroom next to the principal's office. It was here that I met with teachers for their interviews.

Demographic Information

The information that I gathered from children at this school indicated a much greater variety of occupations among their parents. The most frequently reported occupations were: hotel worker, dressmaker, shop keeper, office worker and mechanic. The second most popular group included: domestic worker, teacher, taxi driver, machine operator, electrician, baker, cashier, business person and carpenter. Less than ten children reported the following occupations: farmer, doctor, nurse, lawyer, police, higgler, waitress, waiter, bank worker, clerk in a store, post office worker, fireman, soldier, bus driver, plumber, bartender, painter, cook, tailor, architect, health inspector, delivery person, shoemaker, barber, gas station attendant, salesman, dentist, fisherman, musician, washes cars, sailor, airport worker, butcher and photographer. The variety of these responses reflects the diversity of the population. Children came from a range of social and ethnic groups that was not evident at the other schools I visited.

Summary of School Entry

When I arrived at Seaside Primary I learned that the principal, Mrs. Bloom, has just gone into the hospital with cancer. There was some confusion about my being there, but I found the staff quite hospitable. The special education teacher, Mrs. Fisher welcomed me and helped me to get situated. I began my days at Seaside at 9:00 a.m. after the children had settled in. Many days I stayed past lunch so I could finish my interviews.

During the first week I visited all the 13 grade four, five and six, classrooms and the special education program. This was the only school where I noticed a program for handicapped and learning disabled.

By the time I reached Seaside Primary I had developed a pretty satisfactory repertoire of entertaining activities I could use to introduce myself. One of my favorite things was to tell the children about cold weather in America. I would have them participate as I dramatized getting dressed as a small child going to school on a cold day. Once we decided on all the necessary coat, mittens, and boots etc. I would demonstrate what a six year old, all bundled up, looks like walking to school. With other groups we talked about my accent and language. I would lead a discussion of the difference between their dialect and mine. Often this came out of a discussion of the fact that I came from America and how they knew I came from America. Sooner or later someone would bring up the fact that I talked differently and looked differently. I also took this opportunity to discuss racial differences and to give them a chance to ask me questions. My objective in these introductions was to use the opportunity to share something personal so that the children would feel they knew me. It worked to overcome the staring, touching, pushing and shoving I received on some occasions. At Seaside I was more successful in this endeavor than at Hummingbird or Cane Country Schools. I was able to walk out on campus during break and lunch with my camera and take pictures without being mobbed by children. Curiosity seekers looked on from a respectable distance.

As in the other two schools teachers were primarily responsible for the selection of students. However, I made a definite attempt to talk to each teacher to make certain that they understood my purpose and requirements. As a result there was a good balance of students from varying socio-economic backgrounds and reading levels.

Since I took advantage of being there to take photographs of the children in my study during their recess, I learned about some of their pastimes. Soccer, Chinese jump, and dominoes were some of the activities I watched the children participate in.

Also during these breaks I took the opportunity to talk to Mrs. Fisher and Mrs. Long when they came to the teacher's room. I rarely had an opportunity to talk to other teachers. I found that most of them stayed in their room, sold ice cream or snacks, or left the school to do errands during lunch. As a result I was not able to build a close relationship with the teachers and found some resistance towards meeting with me to discuss the books. I believe that the resistance was due only in part to their unfamiliarity with me. The rest was due to their very busy schedules.

The Interview Setting

I was given a room off to one side of the building that was quite private and had electricity. It was about six by eight feet, just large enough for a small table and five or six chairs. There was a door that could be shut to keep out noise and prying eyes. The room faced the back of the school where almost no one ever came. It was quite pleasant to look out the windows on two sides onto a grassy area and trees. When it rained hard we would be overwhelmed with the sound of it pounding on the roof, but otherwise there were no interruptions in this setting.

Profile of Students

Thirteen students participated in this research from Seaside Primary. They came out of thirteen classes. Four students came from each of the grades four, five and six.

One student came who was a fifth grader in the Special Education class. Top, middle and bottom reading groups were represented in this selection. Eight of the students were boys and five of the students were girls.

Eleven of the students reported that both parents were Jamaican. Two students reported that one parent's family came from India.

Based on the reports from the students and my own visits to some of the homes, I considered that I had one student from an upper middle income level family. Eight students were considered to be from middle income families. Two students were considered to be from lower middle income families. And, one student from a lower income situation.

Comparison of the Student Profiles

Fourteen students were used from Hummingbird All Age school, and thirteen students each from Cane Country Primary and Seaside Primary. While I feel there was no basic difference between the three groups of students and their responses, the group interviews ended up being uneven. Some groups were able to meet for a full hour each session. Others had interruptions or had to be cut short. I was fresher for the Hummingbird interviews than I was for either Cane Country or Seaside. On the whole the Hummingbird interviews were longer.

There was no apparent significant difference in the responses to questions asked in this study based on sex or ethnicity of the participating students. The girls and boys did occasionally argue about sex roles of the characters in the stories. For example, the girls thought that the boys in a story were typical of Jamaican boys because they did something rough or rude. This shows that the students found the story relevant to their experience.

There were no arguments that developed by students of different ethnic heritages over the role of characters or their behavior. Arguments did occur throughout the interviews over the ethnic appearance of the characters, but there was no apparent delineation of the student's ethnicity in the way these responses occurred.

Fifteen students were considered to be from a middle economic level. Thirteen from a lower middle economic level and eleven from a lower economic level. Only one of the students gave me evidence of being from an upper economic level. This was not surprising because many children from the upper economic situations attend private schools.

There was no significant difference in the amount or quality of responses on the basis of economic status. Within all the groups there were students who responded a great deal and some who responded hardly at all.

Students were selected from different reading levels in each of the three schools. Hummingbird and Seaside students represented a more evenly balanced group of abilities. According to the teacher's records there were almost no low level readers included in Cane Country's interviews. However, my interviews indicate that some of the students were indeed low level readers. There were quiet students represented at each reading level as well as highly verbal students. The difference seems to be as much on the basis of personality as reading level. While there does not seem to be any pattern according to reading level, it may be that students who were not able to participate in class discussion especially at the lower levels were not included in this study on purpose by the teachers' choice.

There were some students who had more to contribute. The grade six students for the most part participated evenly in quantity as well as quantity of responses. Grade five and grade four groups each had one or two that dominated the group while the others held back. I had one sixth grade student, Bertram, at Seaside Primary who did not contribute very much, but his ideas were clear and indicated an understanding of the questions and stories. He missed most of the sessions because of attendance problems. Other students did not contribute as much as other students and may not have understood the questions. Grade four students, also seemed to have difficulty responding to me. They tended to hold back unless I asked a question directly to them.

The difference in these cases appears to have been due to my language and the types of questions I asked. There does not seem to be a difference due to reading proficiency, but rather individual participation in the discussions.

Student Interviews

Students interviews took place at each school according to grade level. After the students were selected by the teachers, I sent home permission slips (See Appendix P) and scheduled individual interviews. (Permission from parents was received before any child could participate in the project.) During these interviews I collected demographic information. The sessions provided an opportunity for students to become familiar with the sound of their voice on the tape recorder.

Following these individual interviews children were interviewed in groups by grade. Each of these groups was interviewed on three different days for about an hour each session. The first day focused on the story content and the second day focused on the illustrations. The third day focused on language in the stories, recommendations for future publications, and conclusions that the children reached about the books.

The interviews were tape recorded but notes were also made during the sessions.

While there was an attempt to maintain the same basic structure in all of these interviews, from school to school, the reports indicate here that different events did affect each of the sets of interviews. Therefore, the consistency of reporting among schools is not even. There was a variance of questions and approaches used depending on the circumstances. There was a difference in the time available for some groups. Some of the interviews were longer and more in depth than others. My own enthusiasm and energy varied and this affected the interview sessions too.

In order to facilitate the reporting of the data gathered during these interviews, the discussion that follows will be guided by the questions. After getting general information students were asked qualifying questions to determine their ability to recognize the difference between what is real and what is make-believe. The interviews focused on what the children found relevant to the Jamaican way of life and then on what they saw as foreign. (See Appendix Q)

General Information

Were There Stories That Students Liked?

I asked students about stories they liked or disliked to get some general information from them about the books and to encourage them at the beginning of the interviews. This question did not directly relate to the relevancy issue but did help me to set the direction of future questions as well as to get a sense of their initial perceptions of the stories.

The response to this question was overwhelmingly favorable of the book project. There were a lot of stories that students liked. The most common reason they gave was that they liked the stories just for the story itself. Other reasons they liked the stories were because some stories presented lessons and other stories gave students information they wanted.

For the most part the students thought the stories were interesting and enjoyable. Grade five students said that Short-Cut, an adventure story, made them wonder what was going to happen next. Other reasons were that "Jamaicans love to make funny story." or that a story was easy to understand.

Lessons were important to the students. It was the second most common response to the question asked about why students liked a particular story. Some of the lessons contained values. Having manners, being kind to one another, being respectful of your elders, being honest, and being obedient were mentioned.

Other lessons taught morals: Don't worry about things that have already happened and cannot be changed; When we are good to someone, the good will come back to us. A fifth grade boy said that he liked the story that shows "people have the love of freedom."

Information that the students liked reading about included historical facts about Jamaica and its people. One student remarked that she liked the story, How Did We Get Here? because "it has many historical facts that I did not know...They tell us of how, where people came from and that's why we have our motto 'Out of Many One People'. Other stories were about foreign places, but recognizable events. A student said she liked the story about King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba because it was about "long time ago in the Bible."

Some stories answered questions. A fifth grader said that Tell Me Why? was helpful because it tells you "why the bees buzz and why some people fat and some are not". Other types of information that students found useful were facts about football and traveling.

It is clear that the students were not only interested in stories that related to their culture, but also in learning new information that built on their experiences.

Were There Any Illustrations That the Students Liked?

Grade Four students identified those illustrations that they liked on the basis of whether they liked the particular character in the illustration. These decisions were based mostly on behavior not attractiveness.

Were There Any Stories That the Students Did Not Like?

Few stories were mentioned that the children did not like. The main reason for not liking a story was that they did not like a particular character. One grade six student said that she didn't like Runaway Car because she did not like Thomas. "He's too lazy." One story was mentioned as being boring and another story was criticized as being too long.

Were There Any Illustrations That the Students Did Not Like?

Grade four students had several illustrations that they did not like. The reason was that they did not like what was happening in the story. One illustration in Can Annie Make Friends? was mentioned because Annie looked sad. The students did not like a picture of some bees attacking one of its characters, Alvin. In another story the students did not like a picture of an old woman begging for money for her bus fare at the bus stop. One students said, "the old lady begging and the people that were at the bus stop....no one pay her any mind."

Qualifying Information

The information in this section looks at the students' abilities to distinguish between reality and fantasy. In this way I was able to determine if they would be able to give accurate responses to questions of relevancy.

Were There Stories That Seemed Real?

The criterion for answering this question was that the story must seem as if it could really happen. Grade six students mentioned ten stories, grade five mentioned thirteen stories and grade four mentioned 20 stories that seemed real.

Reasons for selecting stories included that they were about Jamaica, that they were factual, that they were historical, and that the events or character's behavior really do happen.

Some students said that In Jamaica Where I Live was about Jamaica because when the boy wrote his letter, "he write the things that happen in Jamaica".

Several students knew about the sports heroes that are in one story. One student knew about Mohammed Ali from reading Ebony Magazine. Other students believed the John Connu poem was real because they had seen a John Connu performance and could relate it to that experience. Other reasons for believing stories included that the story was from the Bible and that the facts were generally known.

An African Name accurately reflects Jamaican history. "I believe the story true because of slavery in the book and how people come to Jamaica," said one of the students. An Angel of Mercy represented historical information. The events, and places were known. One student said that she knew the story was true because the story about Mary Seacole was also in other books.

Those Who Left Jamaica shows the importance of identifying with your roots. This was important because of the prejudice that exists between Black and Whites. One student said, "And I think Blacks should be proud and think of what their foreparents went through long ago, and I think they should stand up for their rights..." Another student added, "I didn't know that I came from Africa or where."

Earthquakes really do happen in Jamaica. Three stories involved earthquakes. A student's comments about one of these stories was that it was true because, "Port Royal really went under the sea."

Grade four students also thought that My Father was a realistic story because many fathers are separated from their children, "plenty father don't want to play their children any attention,"and "many father give their children money."

Many of the characterizations seemed real to the students. One story seemed real because "nowadays you find that some people marry other people because of their riches."

Another story about a king who tests his people's honesty by leaving money out during a party represents realistic behavior because as one student said, "at Jamaica they would take up money from the place because no one wouldn't see plenty money and don't take it up." The Runaway Car was real because it reflected typical behavior of the boys in Jamaica. One of the girls said "Most of the boys in Jamaica, they don't behave themselves...they don't hear, they think they are right for everything they say about themselves...They don't like girls although they are telling them the right (way to behave), they say it's wrong."

Were There Illustrations That Looked Real?

Students thought illustrations looked real because they reminded them of something they had seen. They recognized people and places.

A grade six student recognized the illustration of George Headley, a cricket play who was described in Some of the Worlds Greats in Sports. Other students recognized the inside of the airplane cockpit that was pictured in A Dream Come True because they had seen it on television or been inside of a plane.

Another reason they thought the illustrations were real was because the story behind the illustrations was familiar. Some of the sports heros in training looked real. Other students thought that a slave who was being tracked down by dogs in Those Who Left Jamaica was pictured realistically.

Other reasons why students said the illustrations looked real included the expression of emotion and the clothes they wore, but not all of the illustrations looked real because they looked like Jamaica.

Were There Stories That Were Make-Believe?

I defined make-believe as being something that couldn't really happen.

Students said that stories were make-believe when they had magical events, places or objects. Some stories had a folktale story genre and other stories were just plain unbelievable.

Grade six students identified Midas and the Golden Touch as make-believe because of its magic. One student said that having a small little man allow you any wish you wanted wasn't real. Other students thought that being able to change things into gold was unbelievable.

Students identified magical places and objects as being make-believe. Since Jenny Never Did Anything Right had a house that appeared and disappeared mysteriously, students agreed that it was not real. Similarly, they agreed that there was no such thing as magic clothes and that no one could be the fool that the emperor was in The Emperor's New Clothes.

Stories with folktale or fiction genres were identified as being unreal. The Kind Stranger, one student said was not real because it began, "Once upon a time. A grade six student said that The Prize was make-believe because "it was a real story".

The last reason students gave for selecting stories and identifying them as make-believe was that personification was used in the story. There were many examples that they gave. Grade five students agreed that Sweet Sweet Mango was unreal because a tree could not give food or talk. In the same way, grade four students that it was unrealistic to have personification of the sun and rain in Mr. Rain, and of the statue in Marble Lady.

Were There Illustrations That Were Make-Believe?

Hummingbird All Age School grade four students were asked to evaluate the illustrations from this perspective. Some characters looked unrealistic because of the expressions on their face. Anancy was make-believe because he doesn't wear a hat or stand on two legs. Personification of the rain and sun in Mr. Rain created unrealistic illustrations. "Rain don't have eyes." and "Sun don't have mustache."

Marble Lady the story of a statue that moves confused the students. They couldn't decide if she looked like a statue or a person. Rhonda concluded, "Some of it look make-believe and some of it look real."

Some of the evidence showed that the illustrations were not drawn well. One student criticized the illustration of the boy in Riddle Me This. "The boy, I think is make-believe...because people's finger are not made with thumb up...and his pant look like it a go drop off too." Another concern was the color of the water in The Life Savers. At first the illustrations had blue water. Later on, one of the students pointed out that the water was pictured all in black.

Evidence of real and make-believe stories and illustrations show that for the most part students did have a good grasp of the difference between what was real and what was fantasy. Knowing this, I was prepared to accept the responses I got to my questions about relevancy.

Stories That Show Relevancy

Were There Stories About Jamaica?

I asked students to point out clues in the stories that helped them to know they were about Jamaica. Some of the people or facts indicated the Jamaican setting. An Angel of Mercy is about Mary Seacole who was from Kingston. Pantomine which was mentioned in another story is an annual National Theater Production which takes place in Kingston. The Arawaks were the first people in Jamaica. Some of the places mentioned told you it was Jamaica. For example, there is a mystery which takes place in Dunns River, Ocho Rios and Fern Gully.

There were events that the students said had to take place in Jamaica. One grade five student, said that Jenny Never Did Anything Right seemed liked Jamaica because Jenny had to carry water from a long ways. "In country like Portland and other country you have to do that." One surprising conclusion was made by a sixth grade boy who said that An African Name was about Jamaica, because in Africa everybody would have an African name so they wouldn't need to tell the story there. Other events included boys cutting school, boys stealing mangoes, children wearing school uniforms, the use of nicknames and the helpfulness of some of the characters.

Some of the details led to the conclusion that the story was Jamaican. Students pointed out a coal pot, an oil stove, a milk pan which was carried on the head, and the mention of Jamaican fruits.

Were There Stories About You?

Students were able to find characters in the stories that behaved the way they did. These characters were shy, liked to play tricks, were disobedient sometimes, and expressed emotions. They identified with Carol in The Prize because of her shyness, with Roy in Just Fooling and his tricks. Donald in Runaway Car, George in Up on the Housetop and the children in Do Not Play in the River were mentioned because of their disobedience. Danny in The Heights By Great Men felt sad and Maggie in Maggie's Wish got angry when she didn't get her own way.

Grade four students thought stories were about themselves because the characters did the types of things they like to do. They mentioned characters that liked to go to parties, chase crooks, write letters, play football, and help out elderly people.

Some of the events that happened to the characters reminded students of themselves. A fifth grader said that she was like Jenny in Jenny Never Did Anything Right. When she went out the door she would forget to close it and the result was the breeze blew out the fire.

Were There Stories About Someone You Know?

This question was closely related to the above question because it caused students to examine characters' physical appearance, their behavior, and what happened to them in the story.

Several grade six students knew children who had handicaps. They related this to the story, The Prize.

Characters reminded students of people they knew because they were kind or thoughtful. The woman in Cat Woman and the Spinning Wheel helps out a strange man and this reminded a grade four student of his neighbor. Some of their misbehaviors reminded them of people they knew. Three students mentioned that George in Runaway Car reminded them of someone.

Students were reminded of someone that experienced situations like the ones mentioned in some of the stories. Sheila, a grade five student, said that Thomas in Up on the House Top was like someone she knew who had climbed a breadfruit tree against his parents' wishes, fell and broke his right ankle. They mentioned people who played football, saved lives, got into trouble, and lost their money on the way to the store because they were playing. Matthew, a grade four student, identified with In Jamaica Where I Live because, "my father is a farmer too and he plant a lot of vegetables."

Illustrations That Show Relevancy

The students were asked to examine the illustrations to find pictures and characters that looked familiar to them.

Were There Scenes That Looked Familiar?

The action, the settings and the details were all aspects of the illustrations that the students mentioned when they talked about pictures that looked familiar to them.

The familiar scenes included the Landrover overtaking the tourists car was familiar in Much More Than Shells because "You can know that this is a Jamaican car because you can see the Black man driving it and he's driving like he's mad and trying to overtake them..." In Runaway Car there is a scene that occurred after the car ran away and ended up in the chicken coop that looked familiar. "I say that it look to me like it is in Jamaica in the country because when something happen, whole heap of people come down and stand around."

Many of the stories were set in places that the students identified. One setting that grade six students recognized was the beach at Ocho Rios in Much More Than Shells. Another student from Kingston said that the house in Jenny Never Did Anything Right looked like her own house. "How the room are. How the place is set up. I have a table with flowers just like this." The Story of Bath had illustrations that reminded Laura, of the place she saw when she visited Bath in Jamaica. "The area are bushy, bushy." The house looked like the bath house where they change their clothes and bathe. The running track in Heights By Great Men looked like the running track at Hummingbird All Age School to students from that school. The cave in Limestone Caves looked to one student like Green Grotto cave on the North coast of Jamaica. Two of the houses in stories reminded students of the Prime Minister's house in Kingston. The bus stop scene in Good Follows Good was also familiar. Students mentioned both the shape of the sign and the shape of the bus. One student said, "After school the children, the bus stop is always full up. The bus stop stay just like Jamaica."

Some of the details in the illustrations helped to place them in Jamaica. The presence of Black people, a man wearing water boots, a country bus, a pudding pan, a bottle torch, metal louvers in the windows, and wooden benches in the school were all mentioned by grade six students. Students found furniture, boats, and fishing nets that looked Jamaican. Other students mentioned a donkey cart, a basket, clothes that some characters wore, and a crocus bag (burlap sack) as evidence of the fact that the illustrations showed Jamaican settings. All of the students mentioned the vegetation and types of houses.

Were There Familiar Looking People?

Clothes, hair and other physical appearances were given as examples of why characters seemed Jamaican.

Children who were barefoot were pointed out. "Most Jamaicans wear (go) barefooted sometimes". Students said the fact the children wear uniforms to school shows that they are Jamaican.

Other characters had short, curly hair. One student said that a character looked Jamaican because, "You can have Indian hair and can be a Jamaican." A fifth grade student pointed out the hair of the mother in Sound At the Window and said, "See how old people comb their hair to go to their bed." Another student said that "the country lady always have on tie-head."

Complexion was also mentioned by several students as a reason for characters familiarity. In some cases they were as specific. Fern, a sixth grade student, found evidence that Dennis in A Dream Come True was Jamaican. His mother look like a Jamaican and his father look like a Jamaican, so he must be a Jamaican too."

Other characteristics included several other aspects of appearance. "I don't think that foreigners have beards," said one student. Another character looked Jamaican because of "her clothes and how she's not fat." Children with poor teeth looked Jamaican. Other characters looked Jamaican because, "their faces look Jamaican." One student suggested that a character with a 'very long' mouth looked Jamaican because "he eat cane too much".

Language That Shows Relevancy

There were several ways that the students identified relevant language. They looked for direct reference, dialogue, specific words, and images or sounds that reflected familiar language.

Reference to Jamaica

The students found direct reference to many places mentioned in the books including St. Thomas, Ocho Rios, and Kingston. An Angel of Mercy talked about the hotel in Kingston which Mary Seacole kept called Blundell Hall. Other references included the Carib Theater (a movie house in Kingston), Bath (the place of a famous healing spring), and Fish Town which is near Port Royal.

The Arawak people of Jamaica were included in some of the stories. Several descriptions involved direct reference."Jamaica is an island" and "The sun is hot in Jamaica" are two quotes from In Jamaica Where I Live, a fourth grade story.

Was There Any Dialogue That Reflects the Way Jamaicans Speak?

There were several ways that dialogue was identified. Dialogue between people that had familiar content, familiar proverbs and dialect phrases were all mentioned.

A grade six student said that the discussion between the father and son in An African Name reminded him of conversations he had with his own father about his grandmother who came from Africa. Another student chose a dialogue that shows how rushed people can get in Jamaica and how they are sometimes rough.

> A man said, `Good morning, Mrs. Brown. May I speak to you for a moment?'
> She replied, `Speak to me, sir? What business do you have with me? I am a busy woman, and I don't have much time to talk.'

Dialogue that was used when someone came to the gate and called out, when concern was voiced over money, and when a child was disciplined for manners all sounded familiar. For example, when Sarah confronts her aunt for having opened the letter from her mother, the aunt replies,

> Don't forget yourself, girl. I am you aunt. I can open your letter if I want to. I opened to see if your mother sent any money. Well, she has sent some, but it is not enough.

Proverbs that the students thought were Jamaican were "Sticks and stones ...", "take care not to fly past your nest" and "keep your feet on the ground".

There was not a great deal of dialect used in the stories but the students did find some examples. Grade six found "Whai! What happened?" and "Trouble Whoi!". The use of nicknames like Mr. Tacky was also mentioned.

Were There Other Familiar Words?

Mention of Jamaican artifacts by name and the references to them were recognized by students. Reference to bananas, coconuts, porridge, yam, crocus bag, and cotta (a piece of cloth worn on the head to balance a heavy load) were noted.

Grade four students mentioned the reference to `chew stick' by Anancy. (Chew Stick is known in Jamaica as a stick of sugar cane.) One student pointed out the reference to `duppy trees' (trees that are known for their strange ghost-like sounds.) in one of the stories. She said that there are duppy trees in Jamaica. One of the other students pointed out the expression, "old man on the wire" which is a piece of nest that got attached to an electric wire.

Not all the references were Jamaican. Grade six students also recognized lunar module and cowboys. Terms like reef, toothpaste, and marble were also selected as familiar words.

Were There Jamaican Images Created by the Words?

The words sometimes painted an image that the students thought was Jamaican.

> The fife-man grinned down at the boy. He had clean, white teeth that sparkled against his dark face.

One grade six student said that the image of the white teeth against his dark face sounded Jamaican.

> They splashed in the water...The water was cool and nice. They climbed up the waterfall and jumped down into the water. Then they went onto the bank of the river and sat down.

Rhonda, a grade five student, thought that this created an image of the country in Jamaica.

Were There Familiar Sounds Created by the Words?

When children play in Jamaica they sometimes make the sounds, "vutnn, vutnn" and "pauw! pauw!" for the sound of a car according to one of the sixth grade students. Grade five students said that "t-rrum! t-rumm!" was an accurate portrayal of the sound of a drum and grade four students thought that the sound of someone yelling, "Broom, Broom!" was typical. In describing a scene where the broom man was walking down the street, one student said, "It stay just like Jamaica."

The answers to the questions about relevancy included two types of relevancy. Students identified both cultural elements, and personal elements that made the stories relevant to their lives. This will be examined in the findings in Chapter Eight.

Stories That Are Not Relevant

Questions were asked to determine if the students also recognized stories that were not about their experiences in Jamaica. The purpose of this was to check on their ability to discriminate between what was relevant and what they considered foreign or not relevant.

Were There Stories About Foreign Places?

Students could find stories that they agreed were about a foreign place, but often they could not agree where.

Students agreed that The Honest Watchman took place outside of Jamaica. They suggested Africa, England, and Egypt. Sometimes they correctly identified more than one place that a story took place. An Angel of Mercy took place in both Jamaica, England and Panama.

Other places were specifically identified. For example, one student correctly identified Trinidad as the place that Joe and the Carnival was written about.

The process of determining the location was well represented in the decision that Curt, a fifth grader made, when talking about Jenny Never Did Anything Right.

> It's not Jamaican because the parents wouldn't leave the children to do everything, like if she's carrying water her mother is sleeping and the pans on the fire burning.

His idea was to rationalize his decision based on the clues he found. In this case he used the mother's behavior as evidence to back up his decision. Most of the decisions were made in this way and although the students recognized that the stories were not told about Jamaica their knowledge of other places proved to be insufficient to make correct assumptions in some cases. For example, Frederick and Catherine is a German folktale. They did not recognize the wooden clogs that the artists used or the beer kegs as artifacts of that culture. The thought it might be America or Spain.

Were There Stories With Foreign Characters?

There were very few stories that were mentioned as having foreign characters. Most of the sports heroes were from other places. George Headley was from Panama, Sir Garfield Sobers was from Barbados, Pele was from Brazil and Mohammed Ali was from America. The stories about China and India and the North American Indians were mentioned. And the students correctly recalled that Ted, the tourist, in Much More Then Shells was from Boston.

Were There Illustrations That Show Foreign Places?

Students examined the physical characteristics of the characters and setting to find those illustrations that looked as if they were representative of a foreign place.

Students used evidence of clothing, scenery, and buildings to determine if the illustrations looked as if they were of a foreign place. Some details were used as evidence as well.

Students thought characters from An Angel of Mercy looked like they came from Panama because of the hats and jackets they wore. The hat worn by a lady, and the jacket buttons and boots worn by a soldier showed they were English.

One student thought The Emperor's Nightingale looked like a place in China that she had seen on television. Another student thought that A Game Called Football was in America because the field was so smooth and big.

Foreign buildings included one in Midas and the Golden Touch that students called a castle. (The story does not give an identifiable setting.)

Grade five students identified details that could be used as evidence that stories were not Jamaican. They recognized the fact that the barrel of beer, the house, the shoes, the gold buttons and the snow in Frederick and Catherine were from a foreign place but they couldn't say where. Just Fooling Again has an airship that caused at least one fifth grader to say she thought this story was from some place other than Jamaica.

Were There Illustrations of Foreign Characters?

Students examined the physical characteristics of the characters to determine if the people in the stories were foreign or Jamaican.

Hair, clothes, complexion, and artifacts were reasons that student gave for identifying characters from foreign places.

One of the girls in First Aid looked Indian because of her hair. Another girl was wearing an apron. "They don't wear apron in the kitchen, Jamaicans" was the explanation. The boy from Boston in Much More Than Shells was identified because "he have light skin". Another student added "his hair looks as if it is blond and most Jamaicans don't have blond hair." In addition, he was carrying a beach bucket.

Were There Words That Were Not Relevant to the Students?

Only grade five students evaluated the language in this way. Most of the words that gave them difficulty were foreign names. Otto Lillienthal, Montgolfier, Leonardo da Vinci and Daedalus were all examples that they gave of words they could not figure out. Other words dealt with things that didn't exist in Jamaica. Icebreaker and concorde were two examples of this. Some of the students could not define what a fable was even though they had read Aesop and His Fables. One person said that it is when somebody is sick and you tell them a story. Another student said that it was a person who followed Aesop around. Finally, one student at Seaside correctly identified it as "a story with a moral."

It is clear that students were able to identify elements of the stories, illustrations and language that were not relevant to their experience. They relate mostly to their cultural and personal experiences. The section also clearly shows that students do not know enough about foreign cultures to correctly identify them from some of the limited clues in some stories. There is a small amount of information gathered in this section that shows confusion on the part of the students to distinguish between what is fantasy and what is foreign.

Comments About the Aesthetics of the Books

Students were asked to evaluate the books from several aesthetic aspects to see if artistic quality interfered with their ability to understand what they were reading or seeing. I examined the art work for perspective, color, and artistic quality.

What Did the Students Think About the Artists Use of Perspective?

Students were concerned with aspects of the illustrations that gave perspective such as the completeness of a character of object, the angel or view and distortion.

One of the most common criticisms was that characters were not complete. It led students to think that the characters were make-believe. A grade six student commented about one illustration in An Angel of Mercy. "This one is make-believe. Is the man, because his feet, them cut off. He don't have any bottom."

Cut off illustrations also brought complaints about the art work. Grade four students complained about the illustrations in Countryman. "They don't draw it good. Part of it not showing."

Distortions made the characters seem ugly. Fifth grade students complained about a boy in one of the illustrations in Up on the House Top. They said his head was very big and he was ugly. Grade four students were disturbed by the drawing of the children in Sound at My Window. "The people look like jack o' lantern" said Rhonda. Another comment was that it looked like their teeth were rotten.

There were errors in the illustrations too that brought complaints. In one illustration in The Life Savers a fourth grade student complained, "It look like they are swimming on sand." In another illustration, they couldn't find the lady because to them she looked like a man.

What Were the Comments About the Use of Color?

The students criticized the illustrations mostly due to the black and white coloring that predominated. They were disturbed that only one color was used in addition to the black and white and that it was not consistent.

Some of the coloring seemed wrong to the student. A grade six student said, "them say it a bright red car, and the tires white", but the illustration uses just black and white. The tires are colored black and the car is not colored in at all. In another story a student complained about the coloring of one of the characters, "Him head is black. He look more to me like a white man, but he's black." Some of the coloring was not consistent. Grade four students complained about the color of the water in The Life Savers. "The river was blue and now it is white....And now it is black." In Marble Lady the color of the uniform changes from orange to black and this disturbs students.

Some of the poor coloring made the illustrations indistinct by using too much black or not enough. It was blamed on the artists. "They don't paint it good." Another student said, "It splash up and mess up their paper." Mostly this was an effect of the printing process which did not print colors evenly or clearly.

Were There Problems With the Artistic Quality?

The students comments showed that they found very little to criticize negatively about the artistic quality. They thought that the artists had drawn the illustrations well for the most part. The most common comment was that they were pretty. One student described the illustrations in Midas and the Golden Touch as "very beautiful".

I was surprised by the response to this question because I thought after all the other comments I would get more negative details. However, the tone of the questions must have encouraged positive comments. "Was there anything that the artists did that you would like to be able to do?" was one of the prompts that I used to get responses.

Recommended Changes

Students from grade four wanted to change some of the stories. They thought they could improve on some of the story lines. Marble Lady should talk to the girl again. Alvin should get beaten for being disobedient. They also thought that stories should be added and others changed. Another Anancy story should be added. Cat Woman and the Spinning Wheel was too frightening for little children and it should be changed. "They shouldn't make the cat woman turn into a cat."

Students also wanted to change some of the pictures. Students thought they could draw the illustrations neater. Other students wanted them to fill in the missing pieces.

Grade six students wanted to improve on the language. They thought that it wasn't always clear who was talking in the book. One student suggested, "I would write it in finer letters...the Jamaican one thick and the foreign one them fine that them can know who is talking." Another student thought that the language should change to show who is Jamaican and who is a foreigner. The way it is now there is not distinction except in a few places where dialect is used. One student, however, was concerned that the books already weren't in `proper' English. "I prefer they write the words in better English...They write it in just plain patois." (Actually, the books are considered to be written in Standard Jamaican English.)

Conclusions

Relevant Stories

Sixty of the seventy-five stories in the series were considered relevant by the students in some way. They considered that these stories were about Jamaica, about themselves, someone they knew, a familiar place, or that they contained familiar language.

The examples of relevancy reported here include two types of relevancy: stories which are personally relevant and stories which relate to their culture.

As a result some of the evidence appears to be inconsistent. It is possible that a story which was intended to be foreign contained familiar characters, familiar scenes, or familiar words. For example, Frederick and Catherine, was a German folktale. However, one student identified in a character in the story and related this as being relevant to her life. In some cases, stories could represent either a Jamaican situation or a foreign place. An Angel of Mercy, about Mary Seacole, follows her travels from Jamaica to Panama and then to England. Students found examples of both relevant and not relevant places in this story and they were correct. In other cases, folktales were retold which did not specify their origin. Some of the responses were conflicting about these stories. For example, The Emperor's Nightingale seemed to have places and characters that some students thought were Jamaican and others thought were foreign. Finally, students had conflicting responses about stories where some of the characters were Jamaican and some were foreign, or some of it took place in Jamaica and some of it took place somewhere else. Those Who Left Jamaica was a story that included both Jamaica and foreign places. The people in the story moved to Canada and Panama. In essence they went from being Jamaicans to being Canadians or Panamanians. Students reported this information correctly, but the result is that it looks like it is an inconsistency.

In my analysis of the students' responses I found no cases where they were wrong in their responses. They had a good sense of what was relevant and why it was relevant. However, they occasionally differed from the authors or artists in their perceptions.

Stories were examined in several ways that helped to make the distinction clear. Initially a survey type of question was asked to collect general information about the students' perceptions of the stories. The response was that they liked the books because of the story itself, the lessons which taught values and morals, and the information which was historical or factual. Illustrations were liked primarily for their content. (Students did not make comments here about the quality of the illustrations, but they did in the final questioning talk about some of the problems they saw.) The comments about what interested them showed that this interest was in both culturally relevant materials as well as those the reflected their own personal experiences. The comments about why students liked the stories and illustrations showed that they had a very positive attitude towards reading the books which they frequently commented about as being interesting and enjoyable. Several comments also indicated that they did not have difficulty reading the stories.

The next set of questions was used to qualify the students by examining their sense of real and make-believe. If they could distinguish between what was reality and what was fantasy their responses about what was relevant and what was not relevant would be more believable.

They described stories and illustrations that were real on the basis that they thought the story was about Jamaica, it was factual, it contained historical information, it really does happen or the characters had realistic personalities. The students were able to give convincing supportive evidence of their decisions. For example, they thought Runaway Car was realistic because it showed they way that boys really behave in Jamaica. There was no distinction made here in their responses, however, between realistic fiction and non-fiction.

Stories and illustrations that they considered make-believe contained magical events, were folktales, were unbelievable, or had poor artistic quality. These responses were also well supported by the students even though there was more discussion about why this was so. The decision that a story or illustration was make-believe was not always as clear as the decision to say something was real. Some make-believe stories were considered `foreign'.

It is clear, however, from this discussion about what is real or make-believe that the students did have very good idea of reality. In the responses they showed a connection between reality and what they considered relevant both personally and culturally. The correctly identified events, values, people and places that related to Jamaica.

Responses to the questions designed to ask students about the perceptions of what was relevant and what was not were also well supported by students in most cases.

Students were asked to relate the stories to Jamaica, themselves, their friends, place they knew, and the language they used to find out if the stories, characters, illustrations, or language was familiar. Stories were related to Jamaica because a place in Jamaica was identified, a familiar Jamaican character was identified, the story (such as the Anancy stories) was identified as being Jamaican, or the language was considered Jamaican.

Stories were related to personal experience because a place looked familiar, the personality or behavior of a character was recognized, and the language was familiar. Responses in this category reflect elements of both personal experience and cultural relevancy.

Cultural relevancy was identified by correct recognition of Jamaican locations, historical events, illustrations that showed familiar people and places, and language that included Jamaican terms, phrases or sounds. Responses identifying illustrations always related to Jamaican people and places because the students based their decisions on what they had seen. There was not a great deal of language that related specifically to Jamaica. Specific references to `chew-stick', being `vexed' and a man calling out, "Broom, Broom" were given as evidence of local language. Jamaican proverbs like: "Take care not to fly past your nest,' were also mentioned.

Some of the responses were personally relevant but not culturally specific. Students identified with emotions, family relationships and specific events.

Some of the language is used across cultures: "sticks and stones....", Mama, reef, toothpaste and marble are all familiar to cultures other than Jamaicans too. So are some of the images that the students selected. The white teeth against a Black face is an image that could come from many cultures including American and Africa.

The students' responses show that they are very aware of what is relevant to them. Both culturally specific and personally relevant elements were identified in the stories but they did not make a distinction in most cases between the two.

Responses to questions about stories, illustrations and language that was not familiar provided evidence of what was not personally relevant, not culturally relevant and what may have been cross-cultural experiences.

One fifth grade students was concerned about the story in Jenny Never Did Anything Right. She said that (from her experience) it couldn't take place in Jamaica because a mother wouldn't leave her child to tend to the house while she slept. Other students said that places were not local because they had recognized them from television or photographs. One student's perceptions of a drawing led her to say that A Dream Come True did not take place in Jamaica because "Jamaican school is not so little."

Evidence that a person or place was not Jamaican was found in the students comments that they recognized people as being from foreign places. George Headley was mentioned because he was from Panama. Evidence was given about places that were not Jamaican because of the types of buildings. The house in The Emperor's Nightingale looked like a palace and the students recognized that this was not Jamaican because there are not palaces in Jamaica. Features of the characters were used as evidence that they were foreign. They picked out characters with long noses or light complexions. Hair and clothes were also indications to the students that characters were not Jamaica. Long straight hair was commonly identified. Clothes that were not usually worn in Jamaica were pointed out. One student pointed out a woman in First Aid who was wearing an apron in the kitchen.

Another student commented on the shorts that two young men were wearing in the same story. Foreign language included many of the words that students could not read right off. In Travel by Land, Air and Sea had several examples including Leonardo da Vinci, and concorde. Sometimes the word represented things that did not exist in Jamaica such as `icebreaker'.

The selections that students made about what was relevant and not relevant were based on realistic conclusions and supported with clear evidence. The conclusions show that relevancy involved more than just culture. The personal nature of experiences and common experiences shared across cultures were also involved in their decisions. However, most of the comments indicate a strong identity with those elements that they found culturally relevant.

Teacher Interviews

The teachers were interviewed in order to get a second perspective on the types of responses given to me by the students. This was attempted by asking them to examine the same elements of content, illustrations, and language as the students.

Each teacher in all three schools signed a researcher agreement before participating in the interviews. (See Appendix R)

Teachers met with me in groups by grade for approximately one hour. Most of these interviews were after school or during breaks which made them difficult to arrange. Attendance, however, was good.

Teachers are identified by the reading level they taught. A top level reading group means at or above grade level. A middle level reading group means at of just below grade level and a low level reading group means below grade level. (These reading levels are not determined by standardized testing, but rather by judgment of the teachers. They would not necessarily correlate to American standards.)

Teacher profiles

Hummingbird All Age School

Ten teachers from Hummingbird All Age School participated in the interviews. Teachers represented all levels of reading at each grade level.

Cane Country Primary

Five teachers from Cane Country Primary participated in the interviews. All reading levels were represented in grades four and five, but only the top level at grade six.

Seaside Primary

Twelve teachers from Seaside Primary participated in the interviews. All levels of reading were represented and special education classes were also included.

Interview settings

Hummingbird All Age School teacher interviews took place in the library, the same setting that the student interviews took place. (See Introduction to Schools and Students at the beginning of this chapter.) Teachers sat at a large table in the center of the room.

Cane Country Primary School teacher interviews took place in the library which was a well lit, large open space. Teachers sat at a table while we talked.

Seaside primary teacher interviews were held in a small first aid room off the teachers' room. Teachers crowded in on chairs, sat on desks and on one of the two beds provided but some of them had to stand. I used the other bed to set up the tape recorder and copies of my books.

Interview questions

The interviews focused on what the teacher's general perceptions of the books were, how they used the books and what they saw as problematic. The responses did not relate specifically to my question of relevancy. This was due primarily to the fact that the teachers were more difficult to interview. They were more reluctant to discuss the specifics of the books than the students. They seemed to be less familiar with the stories than were their students and they did not bring their books to the meetings. As a result my few copies were shared around, but few specific comments were made.

What Were the General Perceptions of the Books?

Teachers were asked to discuss the content, illustrations, and language of the stories. This is a summary of the comments that they made that relate to the books in a general way.

The overwhelming feeling was that the book project had been a success. The students enjoyed reading the books because they were interesting and informative. The teachers all agreed that the content of the books was mostly based on the Jamaican culture.

While it was commented that the books were not challenging, this was seen as both a positive and negative criticism. Top level and middle level reading teachers wanted more challenging materials, but low level reading teachers thought they were challenging enough. Top level reading teachers and middle level reading teachers reported that students could read the stories easily. Low level reading teachers said that they could read them with assistance. The overall impression that they gave was that they were appropriately written for middle and upper level students, but a little difficult for some low level students. Much of the discussion around difficulty focused on the vocabulary that was included. Top and middle level teachers thought that the vocabulary was too simple and needed upgrading. Low level teachers thought that the vocabulary was appropriate. Some of it was difficult for their students.

Teachers also agreed that the illustrations were an important part of the series and that they were helpful. Pictures aided students in telling the stories and relate to everyday experiences that the students can easily recognize.

Were the Stories Relevant to the Students?

The responses from teachers showed both personal and cultural relationships that affect students. Specific responses to the relevancy question focused on the content of the books. Their comments reflected both personal and cultural relevancy.

Earthquakes was very relevant at the time the story was read because the students had just experienced an earthquake. Heights by Great Men was mentioned because of the familiarity students have with intra-school sports. A Home With Mama was considered to be a family situation that the students knew about.

Other stories were familiar because they were factual or historical. A Game Called Football contained important facts and How Did We Get Here? was historical. Limestone and Caves was familiar because the student knew about caves, but it was also unfamiliar because they did not know limestone. Anancy stories were mentioned by both fourth and fifth grade teachers because they thought the students knew them.

Finally, grade six teachers also mentioned China and India because it connected with the curriculum at the time it was taught.

Were There Stories That Were Not Relevant to the Students?

This response focuses on the content of the stories that was unfamiliar or new, and unfamiliar words. Students had trouble with some of the stories because they had not had experience traveling. Teachers reported that both Aesop and His Fables and The Emperor's New Clothes were new to the students. There were three stories that the teachers said students did not believe: The Emperor's New Clothes, Frederick and Catherine and Jenny Never Did Anything Right.

Some of the stories contained unfamiliar words or expressions. For example, one story talked about an airship and icebreakers.

The teachers felt that the expression `Keep Your Feet on the Ground' was confusing because the literal interpretation does not relate to the story. Students were required to use an inferential interpretation of this title. Teachers said that they had to teach this interpretation.

Recommendations made by the teachers

Most of the recommendations focused on the presentation of the books. Teachers were concerned about the print, the clarity of illustrations, the color in the illustrations, the size of the print and the use of newsprint. They suggested that improvements could be made in all of the above areas.

There were some comments about the overall series. One grade four teacher thought that there should be more of a balance between fiction and non-fiction. (There were only 6 non-fiction stories out of the total 28 stories for that grade.) A Seaside Primary teacher suggested that more poems could be used. Other teachers thought that there should be more books to accommodate students who completed those assigned to a grade before the year was over. Mrs. Fischetti, a grade six teacher from Cane Country, recommended one more at the beginning of the year and one more at the end.

Seaside teachers thought that the language needed upgrading. While it was all right for lower level readers the upper level readers needed more challenging vocabulary.

Another teacher from Seaside recommended color coding by reading level instead of grade level.

Conclusions

The teachers' interviews were meant to be used to verify the findings of the students' interviews. However, due to time constraints, difficulty of interviews, and the fact that teacher's were not as familiar with the stories as the students, very little information regarding the relevancy question was collected. A brief summary of the nature of the teachers' support follows.

Was There Evidence in the Responses Given by Teachers to Support the Student Interviews?

The overall reaction from teachers repeats the type of enthusiasm that I received from the students. The books were well received and well liked. For the most part they were not difficult to read because they related well to the students' lives and their language. Both teachers and students agreed that the historical and informational levels of the stories helped to make them relevant as well as the realistic fiction.

One point they agreed with students on was the relevancy of the Anancy stories. This particular finding contradicts the grade five teacher in the Ministry of Education study (see Chapter Four).

Other responses made by the teachers support comments made by students which showed that some of the students were not familiar with A Dream Come True and many of the students did not find relevancy in Travel by Land, Air and

Sea. In particular, teachers confirmed the students' comment that the names in Travel by Land, Sea and Air were troublesome.

Students agreed with teachers that The Emperor's New Clothes did not seem real, but evidence from the students showed that they were not clear about Jenny Never Did Anything Right.

Other students' comments were not verified and the teachers added some new perspectives to the discussion. However, the major differences here were not in terms of the general evaluation of the series and its relevance. Both students and teachers saw the books as being highly relevant. The differences came from individual preferences and perceptions of the stories, illustrations and language.

Summary

This chapter provided an analysis of three Jamaican schools in terms of their setting and demographics, my own entry into these schools, and interviews with students and teachers in each school. It examined the students and teachers' general impressions of the series and then looked at specifics which indicate whether the stories are relevant or not to the students.

Responses to questions differed in quantity but not quality between schools. Differences between students were highly individualized as you would find in any classroom. Some students were more verbal than others. Some groups were more enthusiastic. Based on this analysis it did not appear that reading level, economic level or environment made a difference between students. All the students agreed that the books were highly relevant to their lives.

Differences between teachers focus on the teachers available time, commitment to the project and the degree of trust they developed with me. All of these were problematic during this research.

The student interviews showed that the students were able to distinguish between stories that were about Jamaica and those that were foreign, and between those stories that were real and those that were fantasies.

It is also clear from the analysis of the student interviews conducted that the students did find a great deal about these stories which was relevant to their own lives. Relevance was achieved by relating to their own personal experience or to that experience which children are commonly exposed to in Jamaica. The evidence was in story content, illustrations and the language of the stories. This was verified by the interviews with the teachers.

Teachers agreed that the books were relevant to the students' experience. They evaluated the story content, language and illustrations for examples that they thought supported their statements. They pointed out that the books were not completely appropriate for top and low reading groups where skill levels demanded different materials. Suggestions for changes include workbooks and more stories.

The findings of these analysis will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8

FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Restatement of the Problem

This dissertation examines the issue of cultural relevancy in the Dr. Bird Reading Series, an elementary reading program for students in grades 4,5, and 6 in Jamaica, West Indies. This is the first attempt of the Jamaican government to produce a set of reading materials, and it is their express goal to make them culturally relevant to the children.

The book project was completed in 1980 and a limited number of copies were distributed to schools island-wide. My interest in the project came during this production and distribution period when I saw a presentation of the project at the International Reading Conference in New Orleans.

During the time that I prepared for my study, arrangements were made by the Ministry, including a tremendous effort at fund raising, to distribute the books to every child on the island free of charge. I began my study the first year that the students received their individual copies to keep.

The research presented in this dissertation is an evaluation of the Dr. Bird Readers in terms of the quantity and quality of cultural relevancy that was achieved, and an examination of the intentions of the authors and artists. This was achieved by interviewing children about their perspective of what was relevant and interviewing authors and artists to determine how this relevancy was achieved.

I first developed a questionnaire and conducted a pilot study. The questionnaire was sent to 700 elementary schools on the island. It asked principals go give practical information about the distribution of books and how they were being used. It also had two open-ended questions to elicit responses about the quality of the series. The pilot study was conducted in a small rural school to test out my interview questions, my ability to communicate with the students, and my ability to develop a good working relationship in an elementary school. The students were questioned about their perceptions of the relevancy of the books. The findings from these activities confirmed the Jamaican Ministry of Education's own pretest results which showed that the perception by students and teachers was that these books do represent the culture they experience. (This will be discussed in more detail in the findings section)

After the pilot study was completed, I investigated the process of the creation and production of the books to determine the intentions of the authors and artists. I met with many of the authors and artists to interview them about their contributions to the book project. I examined both their goals and intentions, and the process of creating the stories and illustrations. (Chapter Six) Finally I interviewed students and teachers from three schools to identify their perceptions of the books as reading texts. (Chapter Seven) The books were examined by the content and quality of the stories, illustrations and language.

The story that I have told in this qualitative research study will demonstrate which aspects of story content, illustrations and language were successful in making these books relevant to the children as well as which aspects created difficulty.

Findings

The findings included here will be reported by answering four questions about the cultural relevancy and production process. I will examine the analysis of the interviews with the students and teachers to summarize the quantity and quality of the cultural relevancy they found. Then I will examine the analysis of the interviews with the authors and artists to summarize the creative process and how it affected the books. Finally, I will look at all the interviews to summarize those factors not included in the questions above that may have affected the creation or perception of cultural relevancy in the books.

Are These Books Considered Culturally Relevant?

The questionnaire described in Chapter Four of this dissertation confirms the Ministry of Education's findings that the books were considered culturally relevant by the students and teachers. The Ministry of Education conducted a pretest questionnaire in an attempt to evaluate the relevancy question in 1979. While the Ministry questionnaire was presented at six schools, mine was distributed island-wide with a response from 327 schools through the mail and 24 personal interviews with principals. The Ministry questionnaire was partly quantitative and partly qualitative. Teachers were asked to fill out some answers by rating their replies. Interviewers asked teachers and students questions about the books. My questionnaires were filled out primarily by principals. The questions were short answer and open ended. My interviews during the selection of schools for the study invited a more in-depth response, and my pilot study added to this with more details from student and teacher interviews.

The pilot study described in Chapter Five provided an examination of student and teacher responses to questions about the story content, illustrations and language. Students in the Ministry study and in my own study differ on their responses to individual stories, but the overall results were the same. The children enjoyed the books and found them meaningful and interesting. A brief analysis of their responses to content, illustrations and language showed that none of these areas were particularly troublesome.

These research findings confirm that children all over the island in a variety of settings would find these books relevant to their way of life. No matter who was asked, teachers, students or the principals, everyone replied that the books seemed relevant to the lives of the children reading them.

How Are the Books Relevant?

There were two ways that the books were relevant to the lives of the students: personally and culturally relevant. The questions below will demonstrate both aspects of relevancy.

1. Can children find themselves or someone familiar to them in the stories, illustrations or language?

Students find themselves in the stories through personal experiences they have had and identification with a character's personality. Some of the stories were about events that were familiar. Children related to the experience of one of the characters who fell off a roof and broke his leg. Other characters were identified for attributes like shyness and perseverance. Students identified with the emotions of sadness and anger in some of the characters.

Students also recognize familiar characters because of their physical appearance. The uniforms they wore and they way they walked were mentioned. The stories about handicapped children reminded the students of handicapped persons they knew.

Another example was the role of the character. Teachers looked like teachers and farmers like farmers.

These examples indicate that most of the ways students saw themselves related to personality or common experiences that were not necessarily culturally specific.

2. Can children recognize local stories, and characters in the content, illustrations and language?

The students' responses indicated a very definite opinion as to what was local and what was foreign. Evidence of this was given in historical data, geographical data, local events, and identifiable figures. Most of the responses indicated a cultural relevance, but some of them were more generally applicable across cultures.

Indications of cultural relevance was seen in references to the Arawaks, to Kingston, Pantomine and Mary Seacole. Students found evidence of what they considered Jamaican behavior in the character's actions and appearance. For example, grade five students pointed out characters that cut school, stole mangoes and were show-offs.

Some of the situations presented in the stories were also familiar. Students had seen a John Connu or knew of a family that had gone through separation like the family in one story.

The lessons that the stories told were familiar. In one story the farmer tells another story about a time when there was no food in the markets in town and people went to the country looking for food. It was then that they appreciated the hard work of the farmer.

Certain events such as the earthquakes and facts such as Port Royal becoming covered by the sea were verifiable through historical documents. The children recognized these from their other classes.

In the illustrations the evidence focused on identifiable geography (the beaches, the mountains, market, bush and fields), on artifacts and details of the culture. Window louvers, bottle torch, houses, baskets, and pudding pan were some of the things mentioned by students. Forms of transportation such as the country bus and the donkey cart were also mentioned.

The students found scenes of vegetation (guinep tree, mango tree etc.), buildings (houses, apartment, and schools) and characters (The Chinese shopkeeper in his shop, Jenny walking with the milk pan on her head, and the girl washing) that they identified as Jamaican. The characters in the illustrations also gave clues that they were Jamaicans in their appearance (clothes, complexion, hair, teeth) and behaviors (Rastas selling brooms, driving on the left hand side of the road etc.)

In the language students found direct reference to historical events and local places (Carib Theater, Dunns River Falls etc.). Details referred to Jamaican artifacts including the vegetation and familiar objects (crocus bag and cotta). Elements of the language reflected Jamaican proverbs ("Take care not to fly past your nest") and dialect ("Whai! Whoi!") The use of nicknames was mentioned by some of the students. (Mr. Tacky; doggy, doggy) Individual words were given as evidence in response to the question (chew-stick, reef, bush). The title, Countryman was mentioned.

Evidence of cross-cultural experiences included reference to other facts, such as that starfish live in the sea and rain falls from the sky, were verifiable through common knowledge.

The children enjoyed the lessons that were presented in the stories. One of the main reasons they gave for liking the stories was that they taught lessons. A very important part of the culture was transmitted through the use of language to pass on these moral lessons. Concern for honesty, kindness and respect was mentioned frequently. Themes that supported freedom and self-respect were also mentioned. Many of the issues were universal but at the same time very relevant to the Jamaican way of life. I heard the same concerns frequently from the adults I encountered in the communities. The books were able to capture some of this oral tradition and incorporate it into the stories.

The words also created images that the children thought were Jamaican, but were also cross-cultural in nature. For example, they mentioned `white teeth against a dark face'. And finally, they said that the sounds that children use in their play were included. "Vutnn vutnn and pauw pauw" represented the way a child would sound like a car.

3. Did students correctly identify irrelevant or foreign aspects of the story content, illustrations and language?

Evidence of this showed in their responses which indicated a recognition of foreign places in some of the stories. Students correctly identified Africa, England, and Panama in the stories. The titles of <u>China and India</u> and <u>North American Indians</u> were mentioned as illustrations that some of the stories were about foreign places. They are also able to correctly identify foreign characters such as George Headley from Panama, and Ted from Boston and the foreign drug dealers in one of the stories. While there are Chinese people living in Jamaica, students were able to distinguish between those Chinese people who were Jamaican and those who were foreign. They correctly identified the Chinese shopkeeper in Just Fooling Again as familiar, and the Chinese characters in The Emperor's Nightingale as foreigners.

The illustrations also were used effectively to indicate foreign places and people. Students recognized that castles and palaces do not exist in Jamaica. Some of the trees and houses did not look Jamaican so students said they must be from foreign. In several cases information they gave was verified, they said, because they had seen places on T.V. that looked like the scenes in the books. Other students mentioned books or magazines.

People were identified as being foreign because of their physical appearance, behavior or title. Some characters were identified by their light skin, their hair or their clothes. Wrestling was given as an example of a foreign behavior even though it was an inaccurate interpretation of the story. The fact that there is no king in Jamaica was used to identify another story that was foreign. There was evidence also in the words. Direct reference to foreign places and events were picked out by the students in their interviews.

It is clear from these findings that the students were able to correctly discriminate between what was Jamaican and what was foreign.

How Did the Authors and Artists Make the Books Relevant?

The authors and artists included both personal and cultural experiences to make the books relevant although they did not make this distinction when talking about what they thought would be relevant to the children. They did this in their settings, their events, and their characters.

The authors attempted to create relevancy by using local settings that included historical and geographical facts. They also included familiar places such as Devon House, Bath and Port Royal.

The artists also attempted to create relevancy through their scenes. The illustrations were created from real places. Some of the artists visited these places. Others used photographs. In at least two instances the artists tried to set up situations using `actors' so they could picture them realistically.

The authors included events in the stories that reflected both personal experiences and experiences about people they knew. The artists also based their representations of characters on themselves or someone they knew. They drew from childhood memories as well as their observations of children today.

In some cases the story details gave the story a flavor of Jamaica. A coal pot and sash windows were used consciously to represent Jamaican history by one of the authors. Artists included things like Jamaican baskets and an oil stove.

There were some attempts to create a local flavor in the language as well. `Woman's tongue', `hugging up' and `prickle' were some of the words that reflected this.

One of the surprising aspects of the stories was the emphasis on `teaching a lesson'. There were both social and religious lessons taught in the stories. Many of these were included intentionally by the writers who thought that the readers needed to be exposed to. They intentionally included those lessons that were specifically Jamaican as well as some that would be universally applicable.

What Other Factors Affected Relevancy?

Some of the decisions controlling the selection of stories were based on curriculum needs. Efforts were made to maintain a balance of local and foreign stories. The stories were also selected to bring a balance of fiction and non-fiction.

There were some details of the stories, illustrations or language that affected the student's idea of relevancy. Sometimes the students picked situations that could happen anywhere and used these as evidence of Jamaican relevancy.

The authors and artists were concerned that the children reading these books would have a broad variety of experiences. Some of them would have been exposed to M-16's (automatic rifles) while others would have been exposed to television and rocket ships. A variety of experiences was needed, but an emphasis was put on presenting the positive elements of the culture. There is a fantasy about a boy who sees a space ship, but there are no stories of violence.

Another area of concern was that the students, both in the pilot and the main study, did not look at the quality of the illustrations critically. They tended to evaluate the quality of the illustrations by the `goodness' or `badness' of the character or story represented in the illustration. In some cases I was able to overcome this by asking students to relate the drawing to their own ability to draw. However, some students responded on the basis of the perspective in the illustrations. The size or shape of buildings and characters often determined their response. Students did not like illustrations that were cut at the bottom or people who were drawn out of proportion.

The overall ability to criticize the illustrations from a qualitative point of view was limited, but the students were able to discuss the relevancy of the content of the illustrations without problems.

Authors mentioned that the vocabulary control affected their ability to write with relevancy even though an effort was made to make up for it in the illustrations. Diane Browne in particular said that the vocabulary control kept her from using local terms and affected her style of writing.

How Do Teachers Perceive the Books as Affecting the Children's Reading?

The teachers in all three schools agreed that the books were having a positive affect on the reading of their students. Students were taking the books home and reading them independently as well as reading them in school. There was a general enthusiasm shown on the part of the students towards the books.

The teachers agreed that the books were relevant. Comments specified that the content related to the common experience of the students. The illustrations were also relevant and appropriate as motivation before reading. Students could understand them clearly enough to make predictions about the story content from them before reading, and they were interesting enough to raise the student's interest so they wanted to read.

The teachers also found the language relevant. Some described it as appropriate. Others said it was easy for the students. If anything, it needed to be more difficult for top reading levels and less difficult for lower groups.

Teachers from all three schools agreed that the books were most appropriate for the middle levels of reading ability. The top groups were not challenged enough by the books and the lower groups found them difficult.

What Other Information Did This Study Confirm or Disprove?

When I began my work on this project I argued that language (vocabulary and syntax) would be a key factor in the readability of the books. However, my findings did not support this notion. In fact, the books did not contain much in the way of local dialect. The dialect that was there seemed to affect pleasure more than readability. In fact, some children did not know terms that originated in Jamaica such as `woman's tongue'. One student said that he thought the language was too much like the local dialect. He thought that it was not proper English.

The students report that only a few words and some of the names gave them difficulty. There was a concern expressed by both teachers and students that the language (vocabulary) should be more difficult.

This finding is supported in the research of Sims (1972) and Goodman (1978) who examined miscues and found that dialect was not the major factor in determining readability. (See chapter One) These studies support a theoretical viewpoint that background knowledge and experience, combined with predicting and confirming strategies determine readability, not the words themselves. The research suggests that providing relevant materials would be essential to beginning readers who have not experienced other cultures or ways of doing things. Both personal relevance and cultural relevance must be considered.

The language of the Dr. Bird Readers did provide a relevancy in the telling of stories with moral lessons. To this extent the language is used to extend the oral tradition of Jamaica into books. This appears to be one of the key factors in making the books relevant to the children.

Issues and Problems in Conducting This Study

There was a constant struggle between `going native' and maintaining my own cultural perspective. At the beginning of the study it seemed easier to become immersed in the communities I lived in. As time went by my own needs became greater and the participation in local events became less important to me personally. Transportation and food were two areas where this changed significantly during my stay. During the first year and a half riding in the mini-busses was part of the excitement of living in a new place. As the pressures for me to complete the study developed I realized the need for personal transportation even though this would cause me to be separated from the local people. It was a difficult choice to make because it affected not only a physical separation but an economic and, therefore, social separation. A similar situation occurred over food but for a different reason. At first I was able to eat the local food without too much trouble but I soon realized that my stomach could not handle the very heavy starch that was the basis for many meals. As a result I bought foreign goods whenever I could to supplement my diet. My pickiness with foods must have seemed a kind of rejection by the locals. It drew us further apart, but it was a choice I had to make to survive.

Other areas that affected my ability to perform as a researcher were the social environment and lack of facilities. I realized as I stayed in Jamaica that I had led a very privileged life here in America. As time went on I became less able to cope and my patience became thin at times. The romanticism of living with shortages wore off quickly as my own needs conflicted. I was not accustomed to living with constant concern about crime and poverty. I learned to adapt to living defensively, but I could never completely shut my eyes to the constant poverty that contrasted with my very protected life in America. As a result my energy and enthusiasm were becoming `burned out' by the end of the dissertation research.

There were differences in the schools that affected the research. When I conducted my pilot study I was able to immerse myself in the school setting at Patience. I was able to adopt a schedule that fit with the hours of the rest of the teachers. The school was small and the staff was very congenial. Once I was able to establish myself I was accepted by the whole staff. I was able to work with small and large groups of children without difficulty. I learned that this was a privilege that I would not encounter in the other schools for various reasons. The three schools in my study began school before I was scheduled to arrive. I missed the opportunity to see teachers informally or participate in the opening exercises. At Hummingbird All Age, Cane Country, and Seaside schools the student population was much bigger than at Patience. It was impossible for me to do large group activities at break time as I had at Patience. There was little or no congeniality between the teachers as a whole and no opportunity for me to fit in. I was not able to develop a relationship with the schools as I had at Patience and I think this affected the responses that I got, especially in the teacher interviews.

In addition to the differences in schools there were attitudes towards me as a foreigner that varied from school to school. At Patience I was able to overcome most of the misgivings that the teachers and students had about me as a foreigner. Part of my being accepted at the school involved diminishing the emphasis on my foreignness. While I was at the school I shared the frustrations of political turmoil and an economic strike with the teachers. I experienced the shortages of food, gas, water and electricity with them. The common concerns helped to eliminate the differences between us. Although I shared the experience of common difficulties in the other communities, I was not closely tied to the teachers by them. My having a car gave me a privilege that allowed me freedom to come and go but it also kept me separate. I was not able to develop a sense of trust with the teachers at Hummingbird All Age, Cane Country and Seaside. At Cane Country, it was the most obvious when some of the teachers refused to allow me to photograph them for the study, and other teachers challenged my knowledge of the needs of Jamaican children during a presentation I gave on reading. I believe that the difference at Cane Country was a reflection of the effect of American tourists in this area. Most local residents were not familiar with foreigners except as thrill-seeking tourists. The American image in this community was not favorable.

There were some concerns that I had about being able to recognize relevancy in the books. I overcame this by using the interviews. The authors/artists' interviews helped to verify the students responses. And, in some cases the teachers verified information given me by the students. Because I interviewed so many people and got the same basic responses I feel that the information concluded here reflects an accurate picture of the books. The details would obviously change if another interviewer were used.

The effects of being a foreigner were not all negative, however. As I listened to the students talk about

Jamaica and the relationship to their books, I realized that they were talking to me as if I did not know. Had I been a local person I might not have gotten the same response. It was believable that I would not know about their culture.

I was given a kind of respect because of my credentials. That provided me with hospitality in all the locations. Principals extended a professional courtesy to me that often went beyond my expectations. They adapted to my scheduling needs and my physical needs without question. I was given a space to work that was private and separate from the rest of the school. This last fact amazed me because each of the schools was so heavily crowded and space was always at a premium. I was often given priority attention from these same principals. When I had a question or concern they would stop whatever they were doing to see to my needs. This was not always comfortable for me. On occasion I would have liked to take a back seat.

There were some problems working with the students. When I began the pilot study I knew little about the students' ability to respond to questions. I had some difficulty with students at Green Island Secondary during my first year in Jamaica, but I had not been able to identify what the problem was. As I evaluated the interviews with the students at Patience, I realized that most of the students were not comfortable with open-ended, thought provoking questions that began with 'Why?' or 'Tell me about'. In the pilot study students responded with a great many retellings. By changing the style of asking questions slightly, I was able to make a change in the results in the other three schools. My strategy was to ask something that involved a simple factual response or recall, and then to move into the open-ended questions. The strategy was effective in that I got very few retellings after the first couple of questions asked.

One of the problems in interpreting the results of the interviews was that students did not always have the same perceptions of the same stories. What seemed relevant to one student might not seem relevant to another student. This, however, did not make distinctions on the basis of the location of the school which they attended. Students in all three schools disagreed with each other more than they disagreed with the comments from other schools. It also does not have significant bearings on the results of this study because the things they argued about were mostly examples that could be cross-cultural or that could be interpreted correctly as representing both Jamaica and a foreign culture.

Students argued about details in some of the stories which could have been from a foreign place, about the fact that foreigners were in the story even though the setting was Jamaican and stories that actually took place in more than one country.

Finally, there were logistical concerns that affected the authors' and artists' interviews. Some of the authors and artists were situated locally. Others were not. I had to reach into a network of those involved in the project and it took me most of the Spring of 1986 to accomplish this. The author and some of the artists that were not in Jamaica were contacted when I arrived back in the U.S. These interviews were conducted in Fall, 1986. I was not able to contact some of the artists at all because I could not locate addresses for them.

The interview settings varied greatly for these interviews. They were conducted in places of business, homes and my apartment. They were conducted one on one. The participating authors and artists were able to devote differing amounts of time to these interviews. Some of the interviews were conducted over a period of three days. Others had to be conducted in one day and limited by time restraints. As a result of these factors the interviews varied in length and quality of information.

Implications of This Study

There are several implications from this study. They have to do with the development of culturally relevant materials, the production of the stories and the need for inservice education.

This study clearly shows that it is possible to prepare text materials that are culturally relevant to student readers, and that these texts can influence readability by the culturally relevant content they incorporate. Specific language, however, such as a dialect is not a concern for readers who have some proficiency with text as the students in grade 4, 5, and 6 did in this study. The study further shows that to create this relevancy it is important for the readers to be able to see themselves, their friends and relatives, and their communities in the content of the stories, illustrations and language. This is done when the authors use stories from their own personal experiences, their family experiences, and their cultural experiences. The artists use images from their similar experiences to create the scenes that accompany the stories. In addition, it seems important to have stories that reflect the moral atmosphere of the children's lives. Although no one came out directly and said this, both the authors and students mentioned the importance of the lessons in their involvement with the books. The readers are able to recognize the elements that so clearly represent their lives. In addition to the personalized aspects of the stories, these students responded positively to the historical and geographical details of their culture that were written into the texts.

In fact, they valued the balance of fiction and non-fiction in the books.

This research strongly supports the notion of interviewing readers to evaluate text as compared with evaluation done by a researcher or group of researcher. The benefit is that perspectives of the reader may be different from the researcher because of educational experience, age and other factors. It makes it possible to conduct cross-cultural studies and eliminate much of the normal concern for bias. While it may take longer, the results reflect the child involved in the reading process not a subjective opinion posed by an adult researcher.

There are implications for other countries as well. This study suggests that it is possible through research for countries to identify what makes reading materials culturally relevant. Since many large countries contain sub-cultures within their majority culture, individual districts should use texts for reflecting the specific cultural experiences and values that relate to the sub-culture(s).

One of the reasons, I believe, this project was so effective was that the authors and artists worked so closely together to produce the books. The constant communication between authors, the peer editing sessions, and consultation with artists helped to create stories that were coherently relevant. This team approach to creating basic culturally relevant reading books can easily be used in other countries as well.

It is clear from working with the teachers that they did not understand the developmental nature of the project. Books were used by grade level but not according to reading ability. One of the complaints that teachers made was that students in grade six who are poor readers should have access to lower level books which are available in the other two grades. This was included in the original proposal, but the teachers were not informed. In fact, the distribution process of the books, one set for every youngster, eliminated any notion that books could be passed from grade to grade. When I questioned teachers about the developmental aspect they said that they were unaware of this goal. If the Ministry is determined to continue the project as a developmental program some major inservice at the teacher level is necessary. This same inservice could easily eliminate some of the concern expressed by teachers for books at lower readability levels to use with low level students. The Ministry could at the same time examine the concern for books at higher readability levels for the upper reading level students, particularly at the sixth grade level. They might consider developing more readers for students who finish the series before the end of sixth grade.

The Ministry is continuing to supply students with individual copies of the books and the Ministry plans to do so in the future. The project seems to be a very positive investment on the part of the Ministry and I encourage them to continue it, and even expand on the titles that have been produced at present. This is a series that may need updating in order to maintain its relevancy for future students.

Recommendations for Future Research

The method of qualitative research used in this study was an effective means for viewing the relevancy of the texts. One of the major contributions made by this research was in asking the children what they thought was relevant rather than projecting what an adult reader might interpret. Additional research would be helpful in expanding the base of this preliminary research. Miscue analysis could easily be incorporated into the interview structure to give more concise information about readability. Interviews and miscue analysis at the beginning and at the end of the school year would give additional information about the effects of the books on individual readers. I would like to compare attitudes towards reading as well as proficiency levels. This would be particularly effective at the fourth grade level as children would be introduced to the books for the first time.

Another study could add a comparison of the teacher's attitudes towards their students' reading abilities and their strategies for teaching. Since I found that these strategies varied quite a bit even within schools, this might have a significant effect on the student's perceptions of their own abilities and thus affects their attitude towards the books. This information could reflect differences in class expectations at different ability levels, which might be changed through inservice activities and an increased understanding of the implementation of the program.

One way of examining social and economic differences might be to give the books to students in private schools and compare their responses to those of students in the public schools. I would also recommend that an evaluation comparing these situations include interviews with the teachers to examine their attitudes towards the reading proficiencies of their students and differences in teaching strategies.

International research might be conducted in other countries to evaluate the need for culturally relevant materials in those schools.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed the steps taken to develop and present this research. The findings given here show that the books in the Dr. Bird Readers clearly do have culturally relevant characteristics and that these are recognized by the students. Characters are familiar. There are local stories. The illustrations and language have elements which the children recognize from their own experiences in Jamaica. While some of these experience are personal, a distinction has been made in the reporting of these analysis to separate those elements which are culture-specific.

The creative and production processes are examined to illustrate the method that was used to create cultural relevancy in the books. Authors and artists paid close attention to the elements of story, illustration and language that they incorporated into the books.

Aspects of the project that inhibited the creativity of the authors and artists were discussed. Curriculum needs, quality of the illustrations, and vocabulary control were all mentioned in this section. In addition, there were differences in the experiences of the students. Some of them had traveled. Others had not. Some of them watched television. Others did not. Some of the information in the stories were not culturally specific. However, these factors did not affect the series to any degree and the overwhelming conclusion was that the series was cultural relevant.

Other research problems were also discussed that looked at my own immersion in the culture, the constant struggle that involved and research concerns that focused during the interviews. I included differences in the schools, the interview settings and among the children. They could not agree on the cultural relevancy of some stories, but their overall responses showed a consistency in their perceptions of most of the stories.

Based on the findings of this study several implications were described. It is not only possible to create culturally relevant materials, but it is essential to beginning readers. Schools in all areas of the world need to look at the micro-cultures of their societies and consider using appropriate materials.

The development of materials could follow the model set forth by the Ministry of Education which required close working cooperation between both authors and artists.

Evaluation should include the children's perspectives on the books. This can be done by using qualitative interviewing and therefore allows cross-cultural research to occur with minimal bias.

Teachers in Jamaica need to understand the developmental nature of the books and inservice is consider an important element that is missing from the current project.

Recommendations for future research looked at building on the foundation of this research to further explore the use and effectiveness of the Dr. Bird Readers as well as to look at schools in other countries to evaluate the need for culturally relevant materials.

Jamaican research could include a study of the different strategies that are taught to students as well as the different attitudes that teachers have towards the reading abilities of their students. Also, a study to evaluate the socio-economic relationship of students to the cultural relevancy of the Dr. Bird Series could compare with public school students.

APPENDIX A

DR. BIRD READERS

LISTED BY GRADE LEVEL

Dr. Bird Readers
List by Grade level

Grade Four Titles	Reading Level
In Jamaica Where I live	grade 2
Do Not Play in the River	
In the Mountains	
Richie's Pet	
Anancy and Cow	grade 3
Countryman	
Fish for Dinner	
Mr. Rain	
The Life Savers	grade 4
The Cat Woman and the Spinning Wheel	
Can Annie Make Friends?	
Good Follows Good	
Broom Man	
Sound at the Window	
My Father	
The Strange Fisherman	
"Riddle Me This, Riddle Me That..." and "Some People Say..."	
Marble Lady	
A Terrible Fright	
Earthquakes	
A Game Called Football	
Do Not Enter	
Little D and Big Bully	
How Did We Get Here?	
The Emperor's Nightingale	
The Dentist	
The Two Magic Words	
Limestone and Caves	

Grade Five Titles	Reading Level
Sweet Sweet Mango Tree	grade 3
Why Dog Don't Like Puss	
Jenny Never Did Anything Right	
The Letter	
There is No King as Great as God	grade 4
The Troublemaker	
The Story of Bath	
King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba	
Up on the House Top	

Grade Five Titles (continued)	Reading Level
The Heights by Great Men	grade 5
A Home with Mama	
The Emperor's New Clothes	
Maggie's Wish	
Please Tell Me Why	
Aesop and His Fables	
An African Tale	
Mangoes and Mongooses	
Androcles and the Lion	
Wild Animals	
Travel by Land, Air and Sea	
Volcanoes	
Some Caribbean Customs	
Joe and the Carnival Costume	
Short-Cut	
Just Fooling Again	
Frederick and Catherine	
Love of Freedom	

Grade Six Titles	Reading Level
The Honest Watchman	grade 4
An African Name	
The Kind Stranger	
A Dream Come True	grade 5
Keep Your Feet On The Ground	
Midas and The Golden Touch	
The Runaway Car	
The Prize	grade 6
Back to School	
First Aid	
Mary Seacole, Angel of Mercy	
Some of the World's Greats in Sports	
Those Who Left Jamaica Their Island Home	
Much More Than Shells	
China and India	
The North American Indians and Cowboys	
An Amazing Journey	
Crab Hunt	
The Rescue	
Ordeal At Sea	
The Fife Man	

APPENDIX B

LIST OF AUTHORS AND ARTISTS

Authors	Number of stories
Diane Browne	32
Karl Philpotts	24
Hyacinth (Peggy) Campbell	11
Jeff Schatzman	3
Lawrence Carillo	1
*Everard Palmer	4
*Dorothy Whitfield	1

*Permission was given for the use of stories by these authors.

Artists	
Donald Miller	16
Arnette Miller	15
Susan Shirley	8
Samere Tansley	8
Betty Anderson	6
Lacelles Lee	6
Jackie Powell	4
Cedric Green	2
Desmond McFarlane	2
Prudence Lovell	2
Beresford Nicholson	1
Michael Osbourne	1
Dennis Ranston	1
Maxine Sutherland	1

APPENDIX C

EVALUATION OF READERS

PRIMARY READING PROJECT

Background Information

This report is concerned with on-site evaluations of the readers for grades four, five and six, as produced by the writers of the Primary Reading Project. The project is jointly sponsored by the Jamaican Ministry of Education and the Organization of American States.

A total of eleven books were written for grade four, twelve books for grade five, and eleven books for grade six. These books range from 16 to 64 pages in length, and contain a total of seventy-nine stories and selections. These stories are arranged developmentally, with strict vocabulary control, gradually increasing difficulty of prose presentation, with concepts and ideas tied to the curricula as developed by the Ministry of Education in the various fields of learning, and with real attention to the interests of Jamaican children of this age. Fiction and non-fiction selections are both well represented, with the latter becoming more predominant with each grade.

The project was planned and directed by Mr. Jeff Schatzman, Reading Officer of the Ministry of Education. The three writers were Mrs. Peggy Campbell, Mrs. Diane Browne, and Mr. Karl Phillpotts. Consults for the first stage of the project (the planning and writing of the readers) was Dr. Lawrence Carillo.

(The second stage of the project is now underway. The purpose of the second stage is to write teacher's guides for these books. The same three writers continue, and the consultant is Dr. Henry Bamman.)

Evaluation Procedures

One of the essentials for a successful series of readers is the careful evaluation by teachers and children in the actual school setting, with the necessary changes being made before printing and publication.

To accomplish this step, six schools, classes and teachers were chosen as follows:

School	Teacher	Grade Level	Ability
Cassava Primary Glengoffe P.O. St. Catherine	Mr. Morgan	5	Entire Range
Denham Primary 105 North St. Kingston	Mrs. Jones	4	Slow
Cross All Age Palmers Cross P.A. Clarendon	Mr. Buchanan	4	Average
Bridgeport Primary St. Catherine	Mrs. Houston	5	Average
Villa Roade Manchester Mandeville P.O.	Miss Callumus	6	Fast
Allman Town Primary 15 Victoria Street Kingston	Mr. Clarke	6	Slow

Teachers were asked to react to a check list for each book they had used with their class. In addition, these teachers filled out another, form asking for specific problems and a reaction to all of the books.

One of the writers and the consultant used another form to interview at least four children from each class.

In all of the schools, the cooperation of principals, teachers, and students was outstanding. Their opinions were carefully thought out and based on experience. All are, worth of serious consideration by the participants in this project.

Results

Findings are presented here by grade level, with specific book names and particular suggestions noted. Any changes possible have been incorporated into the manuscripts and dummies before they go to the printer.

Specific recommendations are given as the problem is pointed out by the reactions to the children or teachers, and are therefore scattered throughout this section.

All of the original forms will be retained by the writing team, in case further reference is necessary.

Grade Four

One of the classes at this grade level was troubled by the fact that children without any prior instruction are admitted and placed by age into classes. Consequently, there were some children who could not read even the easiest books of the series (at grade 2 difficulty level). In addition, the progress of this class was slowed by three weeks of rain so a great deal of coverage of all the books was not possible.

However, those books which were used gave rise to significant opinions which may be summarized thusly:

1. Books liked best by the teacher: The Cat Woman and the Spinning Wheel. ("Teaches the lesson that one should not pretend because the pretense will one day be seen through")

Book liked least: None

2. Of the books rated on the check list: Broom Man rated highest in most categories.

There is a question in regard to size of book and layout, including illustrations.

3. All of the children interviewed obviously enjoyed the stories they had read. They appreciated the Jamaican settings and characters. The story Broom Man was liked especially, and the moral of the story was perceived and remembered.

In a few cases, more illustrations (particularly of a spinning wheel) were desired.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. In cases of very slow classes, the materials recently developed for grades 1 and 2 should be utilized, even before attempting the "review" books of this series.

B. Size of the books should be increased from 7" x 9" to 8" x 10".

C. Very careful illustration of the spinning wheel is needed.

The other class of grade four level produced the following results:

1. The teacher pointed out problems of pages missing and poor quality printing, as well as some hastily-done illustrations. Of course, these were duplicated tryout books, and the duplicator process was not always adequate.

The teacher listed In Jamaica Where I Live for practical reasons. "It teaches how to write a letter" and "is loaded with information about our country." Further, "the second story is quite relevant to our Jamaican life style and to the children's knowledge along with the fact that it teaches a beautiful lesson on obedience."

He did not like the story, Anancy and Cow, in comparison, because Anancy stories do not seem to be within the children's experience, at least in his area.

Illustrations in Fish for Dinner and Broom Man were felt to be of poor quality.

2. Again, in the children's interviews, the stories were liked very much, and they could identify with some of the characters. Most of the stories were read easily, and morals were learned by all. Favourite stories were Marble Lady (2 girls) Anancy and Cow, and The Kind Stranger. In the Mountains and In Jamaica Where I Live were not liked as

well as the rest. (Note contrast to teacher's evaluation). The reality of the stories was often mentioned, particularly in Life Savers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Care must be taken in reading galley proof to insure clear printing of all pages.

B. The illustrations wee often done hastily, in order to produce materials for the try-outs. This will be corrected in the final editions. Color will be used.

C. The teacher's guide is already planned to include both comprehension questions and a variety of activities.

D. Any changes in the stories in the future should include both children's and teacher's opinions - they differ, but are both important.

Grade Five

In grade five, the evaluations by the teachers were extremely complete and thoughtful. Selected quotes follow:

1. "In some of the books are found words wrongly spelt, malcutting of pages that remove printing, and misprint.

...A committee should be appointed to scan the books to assure proper finishing."

2. "The books are well graded. The graded progress...is clearly seen. This provides appropriate reading material for the various levels within the class."

3. "The contents of each reader are within the children's comprehension and life experience... they are able to identify themselves with some of the events in the stories and are also able to relate similar stories."

4. "... the careful adding of repetitional words in the first three books facilitate easy continuous reading for slower learners."

5. "I would suggest that the pictures should be mounted on a page, each by itself ... and should not be crowded into the print, ... as well as colourful and full of action.

6. "There were not activities and each week I had to set varied activities for four groups."

7. "Pupils from other grade 5 and 6 classes came in and asked to be allowed to read books."

Favourite books were There is No King as Great as God because of the good lesson it teachers; and "all of the books are good."

In-so-far as the children were concerned:

1. Favourite books were Sweet Sweet Mango Tree, Short Cut, and There is No King as Great as God.

Not liked as well were: Frederick and Catherine, Jenny Never Did Anything Right, The Trouble Maker and Volcanoes. In further questioning it was found that if a story has stupid or misbehaving characters, this gives the whole story a negative interpretation or feeling in the mind of the child. (Actually, the story was good, since they could not have understood the characters so well if it was not well portrayed).

And again, the moral teachings, the enjoyment and the appreciation of reality permeated all the children's answers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. From these comments, it is obvious that the painful attention to difficulty level, gradual-progression and vocabulary repetition has paid off.

B. In illustration, care must be taken to not crowd or interfere with the print.

C. In future evaluations of books with children, be careful to question negative response to a story. It may be based on a moral-transfer difficulty rather than a problem with the story.

Grade Six

From the teacher's evaluation:

1. "A Dream Come True could have ended sooner, or the children could have made their own ending."

2. "Make some of the stories a little shorter. Make a list of all new words at the back of each story."

3. "Suggest activities in which children are asked to predict outcomes..."

4. Favourite book was Book One, both because it demonstrated fairness and honesty and appealed to the

children; and because "the graphics were quite relevant" and promoted understanding.

But book seven was thought to have a rather heavy historical background for this grade level.

The children liked Honest Watchman, The Kind Stranger and A Dream Come True most of all. Some problems were noted in African Name predominantly in what the children perceived as lack of reality.

Once more, the stories were obviously enjoyed. Specific characters were mentioned, some as acting "real Jamaican". The children can see themselves and their friends in the stories. Such values as honesty, kindness and sharing were depicted and appreciated by the children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Since it is not possible, at this point, to shorten several of the stories very much, it is suggested that:

1. Use the teacher's guides to suggest a place to stop the story and ask for either written or oral predicted outcomes.

2. Indicate "break points" in the story and suggest intermediate activities.

3. Give other reasons to the teacher so readiness for the story may be promoted (historical, geographical, or scientific). Or give basic facts in the guide if references are difficult to obtain.

B. The new words are to be listed at the back of each book, and listed by story.

SUMMARY

It would appear obvious from these evaluation instruments that the major purposes have been achieved:

1. Grading, difficulty levels, and progression are accurate and helpful.

2. The children's interests have been captured.

3. The teacher's guides, as planned, will put the capstone on the series.

4. This is a Jamaican series of books, fitted to Jamaican children and teachers.

Careful attention to illustration and reading of galleys is essential to insure both attractiveness and accuracy during the next few months.

It is the opinion of this consultant that, very soon, these other aspects need real consideration:

A. Supplementary reading materials to add to this series, based on the same design.

B. Workshops for teachers to help in easy classroom use of this new approach, all over Jamaica.

C. Possible extension of materials for seventh and eighth grade students and/or bright sixth graders.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Lawrence W. Carrillo

APPENDIX D

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOLS

Ministry of Education
16 East Street
Montego Bay

Dear Principal,

This short questionnaire is designed to bring a much needed evaluation of the Dr. Bird Reading Series to the Ministry of Education. I would appreciate information regarding the strengths and problems connected with their use.

As this series is a first attempt to produce appropriate materials in reading for students of Grades 4 - 6 it is a vital evaluation. It can influence the future of such production in Jamaica.

Thank you for your assistance in filling out the questionnaire below and returning this as promptly as possible.

Sincerely,

Alis Glazier
Evaluator

Mr. Dodd
Ministry of
Education

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOLS

SCHOOL ____________________ DATE ________________

PARISH ____________________ No. of students 4 - 6 ________________

No. of teachers 4 - 6 ________________

1. Do you currently have Dr. Bird Readers? yes no

2. How many complete sets do you have? ______
   original sets _____
   new newsprint sets _____

3. How many teachers are using the series now? _____
   Do other teachers use them later on?

4. How are the texts being used?
   _____ as supplementary readers with no instruction
   _____ as supplementary readers with instruction
   _____ as textbooks with teachers manual
   _____ other:

5. How often are then used?
   _____frequently _____sometimes _____never
   _____1x week _____2x week _____1x month
   _____2x month etc.

6. Do the teachers express dislike or pleasure with the books?

   Can you mention any credits?

   Can you mention any concerns?

APPENDIX E

RECORD OF RETURNS

Parish	Number	Mail returns	School visit
Clarendon	66	32*	-
Hanover	34	17	3
Kingston	23	4	2
Manchester	50	19	4
Portland	42	20	-
St. Andrew	67	25	2
St. Ann	59	33	1
St. Catherine	79	26	3
St. Elizabeth	72	39*	-
St. James	36	22	5
St. Mary	56	30	1
St. Thomas	38	15	-
Trelawny	28	15	1
Westmoreland	51	32	2

*One questionnaire from each of these parishes was not tallied with the rest.

APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE:
CREDITS/CONCERNS

I. Credits	No. of Schools	%
A. Content		
1. Motivation	24	7%
2. Reading level	58	17%
3. Cultural relevance	100	28%
4. Age relevance	11	3%
5. Morals (Use of in story)	15	4%
6. Factual information	59	17%
7. Appropriate vocabulary	39	11%
8. Variety of Stories	17	5%
9. Books are interesting	107	38%
10. Illustrations	11	3%
11. Provides variety of Lang. Arts.	4	1%
12. Follow-up activities	33	9%
13. Length of stories	5	1%
14. Teachers enjoyed stories	203	58%
B. Teaching Method		
1. Individualization	15	4%
2. Group instruction	3	1%
3. Parental instruction	1	.5%
4. Self Instruction	6	2%
C. Teaching Strategy		
1. Repetition of words	6	2%
2. Use of sight words	1	.5%
3. Relates to other subjects	13	4%
4. Teaching manual helpful	14	4%
5. Promotes reading of supplementary materials	2	1%
D. Achievement		
1. High comprehension	12	3%
2. Improved reading	25	7%
3. Accomplishment gained	4	1%
4. Learn to read less time	2	1%
5. Enjoy reading	29	8%
E. Book Format		
1. Size	2	1%
2. Covers	1	.5%
3. Legibility	1	.5%
4. Number of books in series	2	1%
5. Use of color	3	1%
F. Distribution		
1. Assisting parents financially	4	1%
2. Individual ownership	56	16%

Total for Credits

	No. of Schools	%
A. Content	328	91%
B. Teaching Method	27	8%
C. Teaching Strategy	34	10%
D. Achievement	66	19%
E. Book Format	11	3%
F. Distribution	62	18%

II. Concerns	No. of Schools	%
A. Content		
1. Low reading level	4	1%
2. Suitability for advanced reader	22	6%
3. High reading level	1	.5%
4. Suitability for low reader	7	2%
5. Vocabulary usage	10	3%
6. Jamaican dialect used	1	.5%
7. Comprehension exercises	3	1%
8. Stories are long	4	1%
9. Stories are short	2	1%
10. Integration to other subjects	2	1%
11. Continuity from book to book	1	.5%
12. Lack of activities in books	37	11%
B. Teaching Method		
1. Need sufficient time for all students	2	1%
2. Necessity of lesson plans	1	.5%
C. Teaching Strategy		
1. Repetition of vocabulary lacking	2	1%
2. Need for challenging tasks	15	4%
3. Lack introduction for new vocabulary	1	.5%
4. Lack of preparation for common entrance	1	.5%
5. Encourages memorization	1	.5%
6. Need sufficient time for lessons	1	.5%
7. Children have prior experience with books before class	1	.5%
D. Book Format		
1. Legibility of print	29	8%
2. Size of print	17	5%
3. Legibility of illustration	6	2%
4. Lack of color in illustration	23	7%
5. Quality of paper	18	5%
6. Length of books	1	.5%
7. Number of books	5	1%
8. Lack of workbooks	2	1%
9. Quality of typing	4	1%
10. General presentation of books	73	21%
11. Teacher manual - size of print	2	1%
E. Distribution of books		
1. Insufficient quantity	29	8%
2. Concern over continuation of distribution	38	11%
3. Scheduling of distribution	10	3%
4. Quantity of future supplies	1	.5%

Total for Concerns

A. Content	72	21%
B. Teaching Method	3	1%
C. Teaching Strategy	21	6%
D. Book Format	128	36%
E. Distribution	72	21%

APPENDIX G

RECORD OF SCHOOL VISITS

Name of School	Parish	Date of Visit
1. Cove Primary	Hanover	1-22-85
2. Green Island Primary	Hanover	1-22-85
3. Villa Roade All Age	Manchester	1-28-85
4. Mandeville All Age	Manchester	1-28-85
5. Negril All Age	Westmoreland	1-31-85
6. Lucea Primary	Hanover	2-1-85
7. Swallowfield All Age	St. Andrew	2-15-85
8. Ocho Rios Primary	St. Ann	2-18-85
9. Oracabessa Primary	St. Mary	2-18-85
10.Bellefield Primary	Manchester	2-25-85
11.St. George's Primary	Kingston	2-27-85
12.Halfway Tree Primary	St. Andrew	2-28-85
13.Spanish Town Primary	St. Catherine	3-28-85
14.St. CatherinePrimary	St. Catherine	3-28-85
15.Bridgeport Primary	St. Catherine	3-28-85
16.Denham Town Primary	Kingston	3-29-85
17.Catherine Hall Primary	St. James	4-16-85
18.Mt. Salem All Age	St. James	4-17-85
19.Granville All Age	St. James	4-17-85
20.Grange Hill Primary	Westmoreland	4-18-85
21.Farm All Age	St. James	4-30-85
22.Barracks Road Primary	St. James	5-1-85
23.Clarkstown Primary	Trelawny	5-3-85
24.McIntosh Primary	Manchester	6-4-85

Number of Visits by Parish

Clarendon	0
Hanover	3
Kingston	2
Manchester	4
Portland	0
St. Ann	1
St. Andrew	2
St. Catherine	3
St. Elizabeth	0
St. James	5
St. Mary	1
St. Thomas	0
Trelawny	1
Westmoreland	2

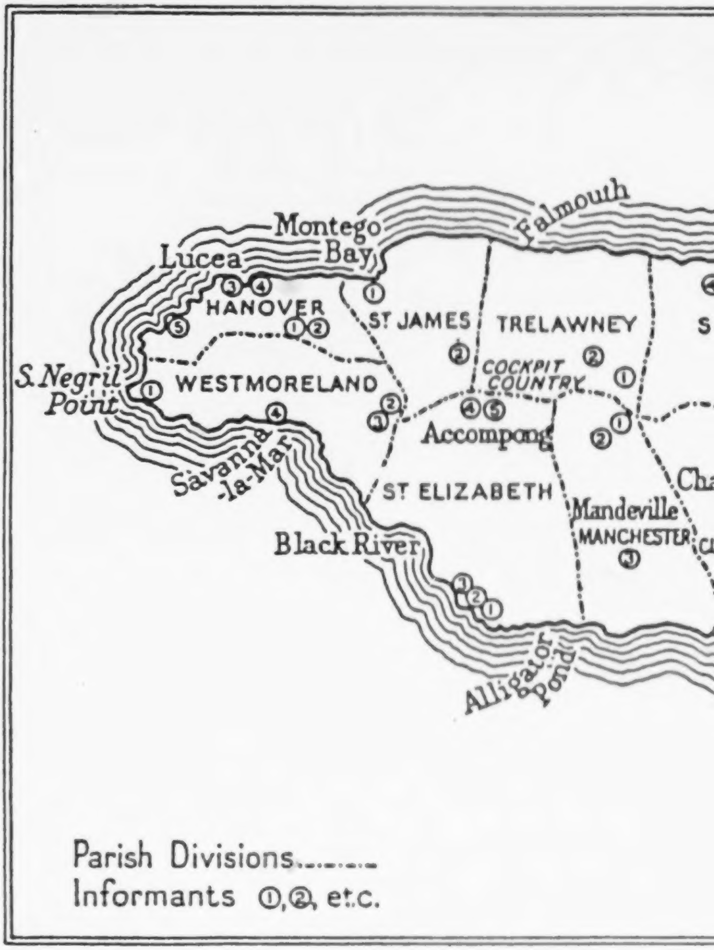
Number of visits by type of school.

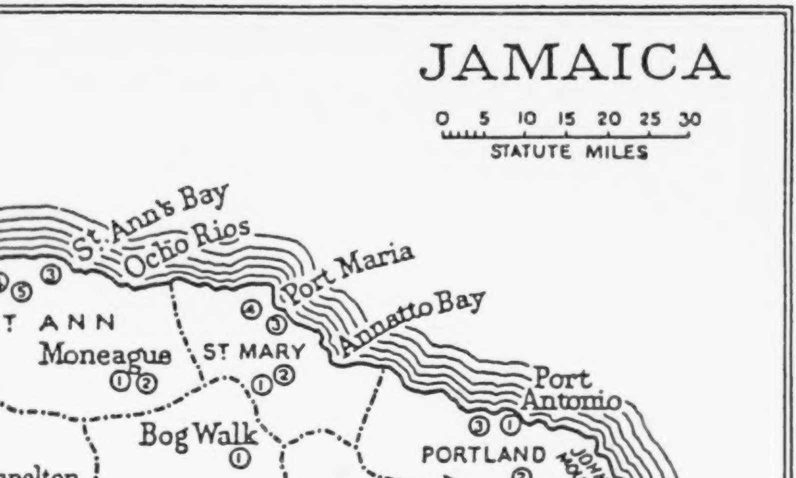
17 Primary School

7 All Age Schools

APPENDIX H

MAP OF JAMAICA


Montego Bay
Falmouth
Lucea
HANOVER
S. Negril Point
WESTMORELAND
Savanna-la-Mar
Black River
ST JAMES
TRELAWNEY
COCKPIT COUNTRY
Accompong
ST ELIZABETH
Mandeville
MANCHESTER
Alligator Pond
Parish Divisions.........
Informants ①,②, etc.


JAMAICA
0 5 10 15 20 25 30
STATUTE MILES
St. Ann's Bay
Ocho Rios
Port Maria
Annatto Bay
Port Antonio
T ANN
Moneague
ST MARY
Bog Walk
apelton
ST CATHERINE
ST ANDREW
PORTLAND
JOHN CROW MOUNTAINS
THE BLUE MOUNTAINS
LARENDON
Spanish Town
Kingston
ST THOMAS
Morant Point
Morant Bay
Portland Point

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM MR.DAVIS

4th July, 1985

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: ALIS GLAZIER

Miss Alis Glazier who was assigned to this school on an O.A.S. project re The Doctor Aird Readers, faithfully undertook such assignment for the period June 4 - 28, 1985.

Soon after her arrival, she adapted superbly to the semi-favourable physical conditions and developed an outstanding rapport with staff and students. During June 4 - 17, she worked with reading groups in Grades 4 - 6, testing their reading skills and offering assistance in areas of weaknesses. During June 19 - 28, she conducted interviews with children from the same grades.

During the entire period, she never concentrated solely on the project nor in the relevant grades, but industriously assisted in many areas of the school's daily routine such as devotions and games, and taught in other grades.

It was most interesting and encouraging to observe Miss Glazier, who was always punctual and regular, utilizing her limited spare-time in rapping with the children on typical matters relating to their country and hers; thus broadening the scope of their understanding and sharpening their level of intelligence.

Miss Glazier whole-heartedly identified with the school both in its sorrows such as the hurt of a child or the illness of a teacher and in its joys such as successes in the Common Entrance Examinations.

Miss Glazier is badly missed on her departure.

Signed: ...E. Davis...
Eatel Davis (Mr)
Principal.

BELLEFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL
WILLIAMSFIELD P.O.
MANCHESTER

APPENDIX J

PILOT STUDY

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dr. Bird Reading Program Evaluation Project

Introduction

I am going to ask you some questions about the books you have been reading this year. Please take turns answering the questions and speak in a loud and clear voice so that I can understand you. If you do not understand the question please tell me so that I can try to ask it another way.

Please tell me your names one at a time.

Qualifying questions

Have you used the Dr. Bird Readers in school this year?

Which books have your read?

What is the title of the book you read most recently?

Questions about content

Was there a story you liked/disliked?
Tell me about it. Why?

Was there a person you liked/disliked?
Tell me about him. Why?

Was there a story that was easy/difficult?
Show me a part that was easy/difficult.

Tell me some things mentioned in this story that you already knew.

Tell me some things in this story that you didn't know before you read it.

Questions about the illustrations

Show me a picture of someone that looks like someone you know. Who does it look like? Why?

Show me a picture of someone that is unfamiliar. Why?

Show me a picture of a place that looks like some place you know. Where is it? Why?

Show me a picture of a place that is unfamiliar. Why?

Tell me about this picture.

Questions about language

Read from ________ to __________. Now we will play the parts using your own words.

Does it sound different? Why?
Does it sound better/worse? Why?
Is one way easier to understand? Why?

Listen to these words. Tell me what they mean.

Phrases were selected from the stories. For example:
from Keep Your Feet on the Ground
surface of the road
take care not to fly past your nest
the higher you climb, the greater the fall

Listen to these words. Tell me whether the person described is a good person or a bad person; nice or unkind; someone you would want for a friend or someone you would not want to know.
Words describing people were selected from the stories. For example:
an old fashioned grandmother - Keep Your Feet On the Ground

pride of his people - Some of the worlds Greats in Sports

disciplined athlete -

slow left-arm spin bowler -

talented world-class fighter -

a boy of his age could write an exciting story - Dream Come True

a poor man -

people of honor - Those Who Left Jamaica

people who tricked and insulted others -

someone who would not listen to reason -

giving a lot of trouble -

people who were well-dressed with beautiful rings and money -

people who were in control -

a person who was thoughtful, had a sharp voice and grabbed things - Much More Then Shells

someone who was thoughtful -

a ganja (marijuana) dealer -

great scholars and thinkers - China and India

national treasure -

Recommendations

If you could talk to the people that wrote these books could you suggest something to make them better.

APPENDIX K

PILOT STUDY:

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What content do you spend time teaching before your students read?

2. Are there specific words or phrases that must need teaching?

3. Do you discuss pictures with students?

4. Name the books you have taught this year.

5. Talk about the Teacher's manual.

6. Are there any things you'd like to change? Reflections on the books in general.

APPENDIX L

PARTICIPANT/RESEARCHER AGREEMENT FOR TEACHERS

Participant/researcher agreement
(for teachers)

I, Alis Glazier, am a citizen of the United States of America and a doctoral student in reading education at the University of Massachusetts. I have been living in Jamaica for two years and during that time I taught remedial reading in a secondary School in Western Jamaica.

I am currently conducting an evaluation of the Dr. Bird Readers for the Ministry of Education and Organization of American States. I have interviewed 24 schools on the island and selected three schools for this study; one in a rural area; one in a rural-urban area; and on in an urban area. I will be interviewing and photographing students and teachers at each of these schools.

I am requesting you assistance with this project. You are specifically being asked to be a participant in the study. As a participant I will interview you individually or in a small group with other teachers about the stories, pictures and language used in these books. I will take photographs during interviews, in class activities and one schools grounds.

The interviews will last about 1 hour. They will be tape recorded and later condensed by me. My goal is to collect and analyze information about the content of the books.

Photographs will include a combination of snapshots and slides. The school will receive a selection of the snapshots.

The results of this study will be provided to:

1. The Ministry of Education, Core Curriculum Unit
2. Organization of American States
3. A dissertation for the University of Massachusetts in completion of a doctoral degree
4. Subsequent journal articles
5. Oral discussion and slide presentation at conferences

In my reporting of the information gathered during this study I will not be reporting your name or the name of the school. I will not be reporting by name any individuals mentioned during the interviews. Any transcript or reports will have a code for your name or any other name mentioned.

(It should be mentioned, however, that since Mrs. Olive Forester of the Core Curriculum Unit assisted me in selection of these schools it is possible that someone could find a record of the names of these schools at the Ministry of Education.)

Although you decide to give consent to participate at this time, you may withdraw your consent at any time during the study.

You may also decide to withdraw consent for any portion of the interview or any photographs. Please notify me within 2 weeks after the interview or photographing

It should be understood that you consent to my using information or photographs gathered during this research as specified in the above conditions. If at some future date I decide to use them for another purpose I will again seek your written consent for that purpose.

In signing this form, you are also assuring me that you will make no financial claims on me for the use of the materials or photographs taken in your interview.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time during this research, or afterwards please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance in this project.

Alis Glazier
11B Norwood Avenue
Kingston 5
926-4647

I, ____________________________________have read the statement and agree to participate as mentioned in the conditions above as an interviewee.

I, ____________________________________have read the statement and agree to participate as mentioned in the conditions above in photographs.

APPENDIX M

STUDENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

Student Profiles

Name of School

Name of student Place of birth

Number of sisters and brothers

Lives with (parents, father/mother/grandparents etc.)

Type of house (Board, wall, upstairs/one level, number of rooms)

Facilities (Kerosene, gas, wood, electricity; refrigerator, stove, television)

Does your family have a car?

Father's occupation Mother's occupation

Ethnic background

Are you a good reader?

Who is a good reader?

When you read at home who do you read with?

What do you read? Where do you get these from?

Do you like school? What is your favorite subject; you least favorite subject?

What do you do when you come home from school?

What do you do during your holidays from school?

Have you ever been to the city/country?

APPENDIX N

STUDENT PROFILES BY SCHOOL

Hummingbird All Age

Reading Student's Name	Grade	
Level		
Benjamin	6	Top
Jennifer	6	Top
Gerald	6	Middle
Marianne	6	Middle
Michele	6	Low
Linden	6	Low
Laverne	5	Top
Daniel	5	Upper Middle
Joseph	5	Middle
Laura	5	Low
Rhonda	4	Top
Jason	4	Middle
Sean	4	Lower Middle
Elaine	4	Low

7 boys

7 girls

Cane Country Primary

Reading Student's Name Level	Grade	
Jonathan	6	Upper Middle
Melodie	6	Middle
Monica	6	Middle
Francine	6	Middle
Andrea	6	Lower
Herbert	5	Middle
Adam	5	Lower Middle
Joy	5	Lower
Eliza	5	Lower
Louis	4	Middle
Joyce	4	Middle
Grace	4	Middle
Candy	4	Middle

4 boys

9 girls

Seaside Primary

Reading Student's Name Level	Grade	
Dennis	6	Top
Fern	6	Top
Sherry	6	Middle
Bertram	6	Low
Martin	5	Top
Sheila	5	Middle
Olive	5	Middle
Lawrence	5	Low
Curt	5	Spec. Ed.
Victor	4	Top
Scott	4	Top
Glenda	4	Middle
Pamela	4	Low
Matthew	4	Spec. Ed.

8 boys

6 girls

APPENDIX O

FACTORS USED TO DETERMINE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATIONS OF STUDENTS

General indicators of socio-economic status:

- Type of house
- Ratio of number of people living in house to number of rooms
- Types of facilities (stove, refrigerator, T.V. electricity, running water etc.)
- Ownership of an operating vehicle by member of household
- Father's occupation
- Mother's occupation

Indicators of lower socio-economic status:

- Board house
- More than one person per room
- More than one of the following: Outside facilities, electricity, kerosene or wood stove; running water in house.
- Occupation service work or small homefront business: domestic, farmer, dressmaker, etc.

Indicators of middle socio-economic status:

- Wall house or combination
- Equal number of rooms to people or more rooms than people
- Electricity, gas stove, running water, television, refrigerator
- Ownership of a car by household member
- Occupation involves employment or medium size independent business: teacher, worker in sugar factory, shopkeeper, mechanic, bookeeper, pastor, cabinet maker, postmistress, police, soldier, fireman, electrician, mason, security guard, etc.

Indicators of upper socio-economic status:

- Wall house
- More rooms than the number of people living there
- Electricity, gas or electric stove, running wqter, television, refrigerator
- Ownership or one or more household vehicles
- Occupation involves professional status: doctor, lawyer, dentist, government worker, etc.

APPENDIX P

PARTICIPANT/RESEARCHER AGREEMENT FOR PARENTS

Dear Parent,

A Study of the books your child is using in school is being done.

Your child has been chosen to talk about the new books, The Dr. Bird Readers. He will be asked questions about the books and about Jamaica.

I am, Alis Glazier, a citizen of the United States of America and a student at the University of Massachusetts. I have been teaching remedial reading at the secondary level in Jamaica during the last two years.

The information your child will give to me will be used to help me evaluate the new books, the Dr. Bird Readers. In addition, I will be photographing students at the school during my stay. The school will receive a selection of the snapshots taken.

I will write a report for:

1. The Ministry of Education, Core Curriculum Unit
2. Organization of American States
3. A dissertation to be presented at the University of Massachusetts in completion of my doctorate.
4. Journal articles
5. Lectures and slide presentations

I will not be writing about any child in particular and no names will be used in my reports.

If you give your permission for your child to participate how, you may change your mind at any time during the study. You may decide not to have your child photographed. If you have any questions please come to the school between ______ and _______ on ______________________. I will be happy to answer your questions then or at any time during my stay at your child's school.

Please sign your name on both lines below if you give your permission for me to interview and photograph your child.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Alis Glazier

I, ___________________________ give permission for Ms.

Glazier to interview______________________________.

I, ___________________________ give permission for Ms.

Glazier to photograph ____________________________.

APPENDIX Q

STORY ANALYSIS FOR
GRADES 4, 5, AND 6

GRADE 4		FAMILIAR CONTENT				FAMILIAR ILLUS			FAMILIAR LANG					UNFAMILIAR CONTENT			UNFAMILIAR ILLUS		
Title	Liked	About Jo	About You	Other	Real	Scenes	Character	Real	Jo Ref	Dialogue	Fam Words	Jo Images	Jo Sounds	Story	Character	Wake Bel	Place	Character	Wake Bel
In Jamaica		X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X				X			
Do Not Play			X		X	X	X			X	X	X				X	X		
In the Mountains					X				X			X							
Ritchie's Pet	X				X	X	X			X	X							X	
Anancy and Cow	X				X	X				X	X					X			
Countryman				X	X		X					X							
Fish for Dinner			X	X			X					X							
Mr. Rain			X		X	X	X	X								X		X	X
The Life Savers	X			X	X		X	X			X							X	X
Cat Woman	X			X	X	X	X									X		X	
Con Annie					X		X											X	
Good Follows Good	X	X	X			X	X											X	
Broom Man	X		X	X	X	X	X						X				X		
Sound at the Window					X	X	X									X			X
My Father					X	X	X												X
Strange Fisherman	X		X	X			X	X	X	X					X	X		X	X
Riddle								X								X			X
Marble Lady					X	X	X	X			X					X	X		X
Terrible Fright					X		X												
Earthquakes															X				
Game Called Football	X		X	X	X	X	X										X	X	
Do Not Enter	X						X			X									
Little D and Big Bully	X				X		X									X			
How Did We Get Here?	X	X			X		X		X						X				
Emperor's Nightingale					X	X	X								X	X	X	X	
Limestone and Caves			X	X															
The Dentist				X						X	X								
Two Magic Words					X	X	X									X			

GRADE 5		FAMILIAR											UNFAMILIAR					
		CONTENT				ILLUS			LANG				CONTENT			ILLUS		
Title	Liked	About Jo	About You	Other	Real	Scenes	Character	Real	Jo Ref	Dialogue	Fam Words	Jo Sounds	Story	Character	Make Bel	Places	Character	Make Bel
Sweet Mango	x	x					x	x		x					x			x
Dog Don't Like Puss	x	x	x		x		x								x			x
Jenny	x	x	x	x	x	x		x					x		x	x	x	
The Letter	x	x			x		x	x										
No King	x				x			x					x		x	x		
Troublemaker	x	x	x	x	x	x									x			
Story of Bath	x	x			x	x			x									
King Solomon	x							x					x		x			x
House Top	x	x	x	x		x	x											
Heights by Great Men	x	x	x		x	x			x	x								
Home with Mama		x			x	x	x			x	x				x			
Emperor's New Clothes	x												x		x		x	x
Maggie's Wish	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x				x			
Tell Me Why?	x																	
Aesop and His Fables													x		x			
African Tale													x					
Mangoes and Mongooses		x																
Androcles and the Lion													x		x			
Wild Animals													x					
Travel	x												x					
Volcanoes													x	x				
John Canoe	x				x							x						
Short-Cut	x	x	x			x	x											
Just Fooling	x	x	x			x	x				x					x		
Frederick and Catherine	x		x										x			x		
Love of Freedom	x												x					

GRADE 6		FAMILIAR												UNFAMILIAR				
		CONTENT				ILLUS			LANG					CONTENT			ILLUS	
Title	Liked	About Jo.	About You	Other	Real	Scenes	Character	Real	Jo Ref	Dialogue	Fam Words			Story	Character	Make Bel	Places	Character
The Honest Watchman	x				x		x							x				x
An African Name	x	x			x	x				x				x	x	x	x	
The King Stranger	x				x									x		x	x	
A Dream Come True	x	x			x		x	x	x									x
Keep Your Feet	x	x			x	x	x			x						x		
Midas														x		x	x	
Runaway Car	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x			x			x	x	
The Prize	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x					x		
Back to School	x	x			x		x			x								
First Aids	x	x		x	x	x	x											x
Mary Seacole		x	x		x	x			x					x			x	
World's Greats	x	x			x			x							x			
Those Who left	x	x			x			x	x					x	x			x
More Than Shells		x				x	x		x						x			x
China and India														x	x			
No. American Indians											x			x	x			
Amazing Journey											x							
Crab Hunt	x	x				x	x		x	x								
Fife-Man	x	x			x						x	x						
Ordeal at Sea		x																
Rescue		x																

APPENDIX R

PARTICIPANT/RESEARCHER AGREEMENT FOR AUTHORS AND ARTISTS

"Evaluation of the Dr. Bird Readers"
participant/researcher agreement
(for authors/artists)

I, Alis Glazier, am a citizen of the United States of America and a doctoral student in reading education at the University of Massachusetts. I have been living in Jamaica for two years and during that time I taught remedial reading at the Green Island Secondary School in Western Jamaica.

I am currently conducting an evaluation of the Dr. Bird Readers for the Ministry of Education and Organization of American States. I will be interviewing students and teachers in the schools about the language, stories and pictures used in these books.

I will also be interviewing the authors and artists involved in producing the original series.

You are being asked to be a participant in the study. As a participant I will interview you about your contributions to the stories, language and pictures in these books. I will be including photographs in my study and would like to take photographs during our interview sessions.

The interviews will last about one hour. There will be two interviews and they will be tape recorded. Later I will condense them myself. My goal is to collect and analyze information about the content of the books.

The results of this study will be provided to:

1. The Ministry of Education, Core Curriculum Unit
2. Organization of American States
3. A dissertation for the University of Massachusetts in completion of a doctoral degree
4. Subsequent journal articles
5. Oral discussion and slide presentation at conferences

In my reporting of information gathered during this study I will be reporting information about authors and artists by name unless you specifically request that I do not do so.

(I will remind you, however, that since you have authored these books information about your authorship will be readily available from a variety of sources including the Ministry of Education and the Organization of American States.)

Although you decide to give consent to participate at this time, you may withdraw your consent at any time during the study.

You may also decide to withdraw consent for any portion of the interview or any picture. Please notify me within 2 weeks of the interview.

It should be understood that you consent to my using information or photographs gathered during this research as specified in the above conditions. If at some future date I decide to use them for another purpose I will again seek your written consent.

In signing this form, you are also assuring me that you will make no financial claims on me for the use of the materials or photographs taken in your interview.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time during this research, or afterwards please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance in this project.

Alis Glazier
11B Norwood Avenue
Kingston 5
926-4647

-

I, ________________________________have read the statement and agree to participate as mentioned in the conditions above as an interviewee.

I, ________________________________have read the statement and agree to participate as mentioned in the conditions above in photographs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, K. I. (1981). Multicultural representation in children's books. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 219 750)

Agar, M. H. (1980) The professional stranger: An informal introduction to ethnography. New York: Academic Press.

Anderson, R. C., & Pearson, P. D. (1984). A schema-theoretic view of basic processes in reading comprehension (Technical report No. 306). Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois.

Bader, L. A. (1981) N-Achievement motive in fiction written for disabled readers. Perceptual and Motor Skills, 52, 314.

Bagley, C. & Coard, B. (1975) Cultural knowledge and rejection of ethnic identity in West Indian children in London. In Verma, G.K. & Bagley, C. (Eds.), Race and education across cultures (pp. 322-333). London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Banks, J. A. (1987) Teaching strategies for ethnic studies. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Barrett, L. (1977) The rastafarians: sounds of cultural dissonance. Boston: Beacon Press.

Bennett, C. I. (1986) Comprehensive multicultural education: theory and practice. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bertera, J. H. & Rayner, K. (1979) Reading without a fovea. Science, 206, 468-469.

Bias in Children's Storybooks (1976) adapted from Introduction to human (and anti-human) values in children's books. New York: Council on Interracial Books.

Brams, P. (1980) Reading between the lines: Societal norms in Sierra Leonean readers. International Review of Education, 26(4), 483-500.

Bryman, A. (1984) The debate about quantitative and qualitative research: A question of method or epistemology?. The British Journal of Sociology, 35 75-90.

Carpenter, P. A. & Just, M.A. (1980) A Theory of Reading From Eye Fixations to Comprehension. Psychological Review 87(4), 329-354.

Carrillo, Lawrence W. (undated) Evaluation of readers primary reading project. (Report to the Ministry of Education) Kingston, Jamaica: Ministry of Education.

Cassidy, F.G. and LePage R.B. (Eds). (1980) Dictionary of Jamaican English (2nd ed.) Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Clay, M. M. (1972) Reading: The patterning of complex behavior. London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Coopersmith, S. (1975) Self-concept, race and education. In Verma, G.K. & Bagley, C. (Eds.) Race and education across cultures. (pp. 145-167). London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Cramer, R. L. (1971) Dialectology - a case for language experience. Reading Teacher, 25, 33-39.

Crismore, A. (1983) Metadiscourse: What it is and how it is used in school and non-school social science texts; (Technical Report No. 273) Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois.

The Doctor Bird Readers. (1980). Kingston, Jamaica: Ministry of Education.

Eweka, Grace (undated) Forward. (Report to the Core Curriculum Unit) Kingston, Jamaica: Ministry of Education.

Forrester, O. (1983) The Doctor Bird Reading Series: A joint OAS/Ministry of Education primary reading project. Torch, 28, 17-28.

Forrester, O. (undated) Primary reading project. Kingston, Jamaica: Ministry of Education.

Gay, G. (1975) Organizing and designing culturally pluralistic curriculum. Educational Leadership, 33 (3), pp. 176-183.

Gillen, B., Kendall P.C., and Finch, A.J.J. (1977) Reading Ease and Human Interest Scores: A Comparison of Flesch Scores with Subjected Ratings Teaching of Psychology, 4, 39-41.

Gilles, C., Bixby, M., Crowley, P., Crenshaw, S. R., Henrichs, M., Reynolds, F. E., and Pyle, D. (Eds.). (1988). Whole language strategies for secondary students. New York: Richard C. Owen.

Goodman, K. S. (1968) The Psycholinguistic Nature of the Reading Process. In K.S. Goodman (Ed.). The psycholinguistic nature of the reading process. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Goodman, K. S. and Goodman Y. M. (1978) Reading of American children whose language is a stable rural dialect of English or a language other than English. (Report Project NIE-C-00-3-0087). Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Goodman, K. S. (1986) What's whole in whole language? Portsmouth: Heinnemann Educational Books.

Grant, C. A. (1977) Encouraging Multicultural Education. In Grant, C.A. (Ed.). Multicultural education: Commitments, issues and applications (pp. 1-5) Washington D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Guidelines for Selecting Bias-Free Textbooks and Storybooks. (1979). New York: Council on Interracial Books.

Halliday, M.A.K. and Hasan R. (1976) Cohesion in English. London: Longman Group Ltd.

Harris, T. L. and Hodges, R. E. (Eds.) (1981) A dictionary of reading and related terms. Delaware: International Reading Association.

Heath, S. B. (1983) Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Henderson, I. (1978) Textbooks as reinforcers of sexist attitudes. New York, N.Y.: Teachers College, Columbia University, General Assistance Center on Equal Educational Opportunity. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 206 789)

Hickman, J. (1981). A new perspective on response to literature: Research in an elementary school setting. Research in the Teaching of English, 15(4), 343-354.

Hughes, L. (1981) Thank You Ma'm. In Sloan A. and Capaccio A. (Eds.) High Marks: Stories that Make Good Reading (pp. 9-16). New York: AMSCO.

Hyman, H. H. (1954) Interviewing in social research. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hymes, D. H. (1983) Essays in the history of linguistic anthropology. Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins.

Kalia, N. N. (1980) Images of men and women in Indian textbooks. Comparative Education Review, 24(2), S209-S223.

Klebacker, K. F. (1984) Contemporary children and basal reading series. M.A. Thesis, Kean College of New Jersey. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 243 094)

McDermott, R. R. (1977) The ethnography of speaking and reading. In R.W. Shuy (Ed.), Linguistic theory: What can it say about reading? (pp.153-185). Newark: International Reading Association.

Mead, M. (1961) Coming of Age in Samoa. New York: Morrow Quill.

Mathurin, L. (1975) The rebel woman in the British West Indies during slavery Kingston, Jamaica: Institute of Jamaica for the African-caribbean Institute of Jamaica.

Murrary, W. (1974) Lady bird readers. London: Ladybird Books Ltd., Loughborough in Collaboration with Longman Caribbean.

Nicholson, T. (1984) Expert and novices: A study of reading in the high school classroom. Reading Research Quarterly, 19(4), 436-451.

Novak, M., Kirkpatrick, J., and Crutcher, A. (1978) Values in an American textbook: Three appraisals. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University; Ethics and Public Policy Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 164 432)

Petrosky, A. R. and Cooper, C. R. Cooper (1976) A psycholinguistic view of the fluent reading Process. Journal of Reading, 20(3), 184-207.

Pope, J. L. (1981) Marketing Research New York: AMACOM.

Population census 1982 Vol. 1 (1982) Kingston, Jamaica: Statistical Institute of Jamaica.

Quereshi, M.Y. and Sackett, P. R. (1977) An updated context analysis of introductory psychology textbooks. Teaching of Psychology, 4 25-30.

Reynolds, R. E., Taylor, M. A., Steffenson, M. S., Shirley, L.L. and Anderson, R. C. (1982) Cultural schemata and reading comprehension. Reading Research Quarterly, 17(3) 353-365.

Rosenberg, M. (1973) Evaluate your Textbooks for racism, sexism! Educational Leadership, 31 (2) 107-109.

Rumelhart, D. D. (1980) Schemata: The building blocks of cognition. In Spiro, R. J., Bruce, B. C. and Brewer, W. F. (Eds.) Theoretical issues in reading comprehension: Perspectives from cognitive psychology, linguistics, artificial intelligence, and education (pp. 33-58). Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Schuman, D. (1982) Policy analysis, education and everyday life. Lexington: D.C. Heath.

Schutz, A. (1967) The Phenomenology of the social world. (G. Walsh and F. Lehnert Trans.) Evanston: Northwestern University Press. (Original work published in 1932)

Seidman, E., Sullivan, P. and Schatzkamer, M. B. (1983) The work of community college faculty: A study through in-depth interviews. (Final report) Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education.

Seidman, E. (1985) In the words of the faculty. San Francisco: Jassey-Bass.

Seligman, E. R.A. (Ed.) (1931). The Encyclopedia of the social sciences: Vol. 4 Com-Dan; New York: Macmillan.

Sevigney, M. J.; Triangulated inquiry - A methodology for the analysis of classroom interaction. In J.L. Green and C. Wallet (Eds.), Ethnography and language in educational settings (pp. 65-86). Norwood: ABLEX.

Sims, R. (1972) *A psycholinguistic description of miscues generated by selected young readers during the oral reading of text material in black dialect and standard English*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation; Wayne State University, Detroit.

Sims, R. (1982) *Shadow and substance: Afro-American experience in contemporary children's fiction*. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English.

Singer, H. and Donlan, D. (1989) *Reading and learning from text*, Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Smith, F. (1973) *Psycholinguistics and reading*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Smith, F. (1985) *Reading without nonsense*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Smith, N. B. (1975) Cultural dialects: Current problems and solutions *Reading Teacher*, *29*(2) 137-141.

Smoliez, J.J. (1979) *Culture and education in a plural society*. Canberra, Australia: Curriculum Development Center.

Spiro R.J. (1980) Constructive processes in prose comprehension and recall. In R.J. Spiro, B.C. Bruce, and W.F. Brewer (Eds.), *Theoretical issues in reading comprehension: Perspectives from cognitive psychology, linguistics, and artificial intelligence and education* (pp. 245-278). Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Spradley, J.P. (1980) *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston.

Stang, D. J. (1975) Student evaluations of twenty-eight social psychology texts. *Teaching of Psychology*, *2* 12-15.

Stereotypes, distortions and omissions in U.S. history textbooks (1977) New York: Council on Interracial Books, Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators.

A study of selected eighth grade United States history textbooks: 1982-1983 Michigan social studies textbook study. (1984). Vol. I. Lansing: Michigan State Board of Education (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 249 142)

Suzuki, B. (1979) Multicultural education: What's it all about. Integrated Education, 17 43-50.

Taylor, D. (1983) Family literacy: Young children learning to read and write. Portsmouth: Heinemann Educational Books.

10 Quick ways to analyze children's books for racism an sexism (undated) New York: Council on Interracial Books.

Troike, M. S. (1977) Language instruction and multicultural education. In Grant, C.A. (Ed.) Multicultural education: Commitments, issues, and applications (pp. 52-59). Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Watson, D. J. (1988) Knowing where we're coming from: The theoretical bases" In Gilles, C., Bixby, M., Crowley, P., Crenshaw, S.R., Henrichs, M., Reynolds, F.E., and Pyle D., (Eds.) Whole language strategies for secondary students (pp. 3-10). New York: Richard C. Owen.

Wilson, D., Craig, D. & Campbell, H. (1978) Language Materials Workshop. London: Heinemann Caribbean Ltd.

Wilson, S. (1977). The use of ethnographic techniques in educational research. Review of Educational Research, 47, 245-265.

Wolf, R. L. & Tymitz, B. L. (1977) Ethnography and reading: Matching inquiry to process. Reading Research Quarterly 12, 5-11.